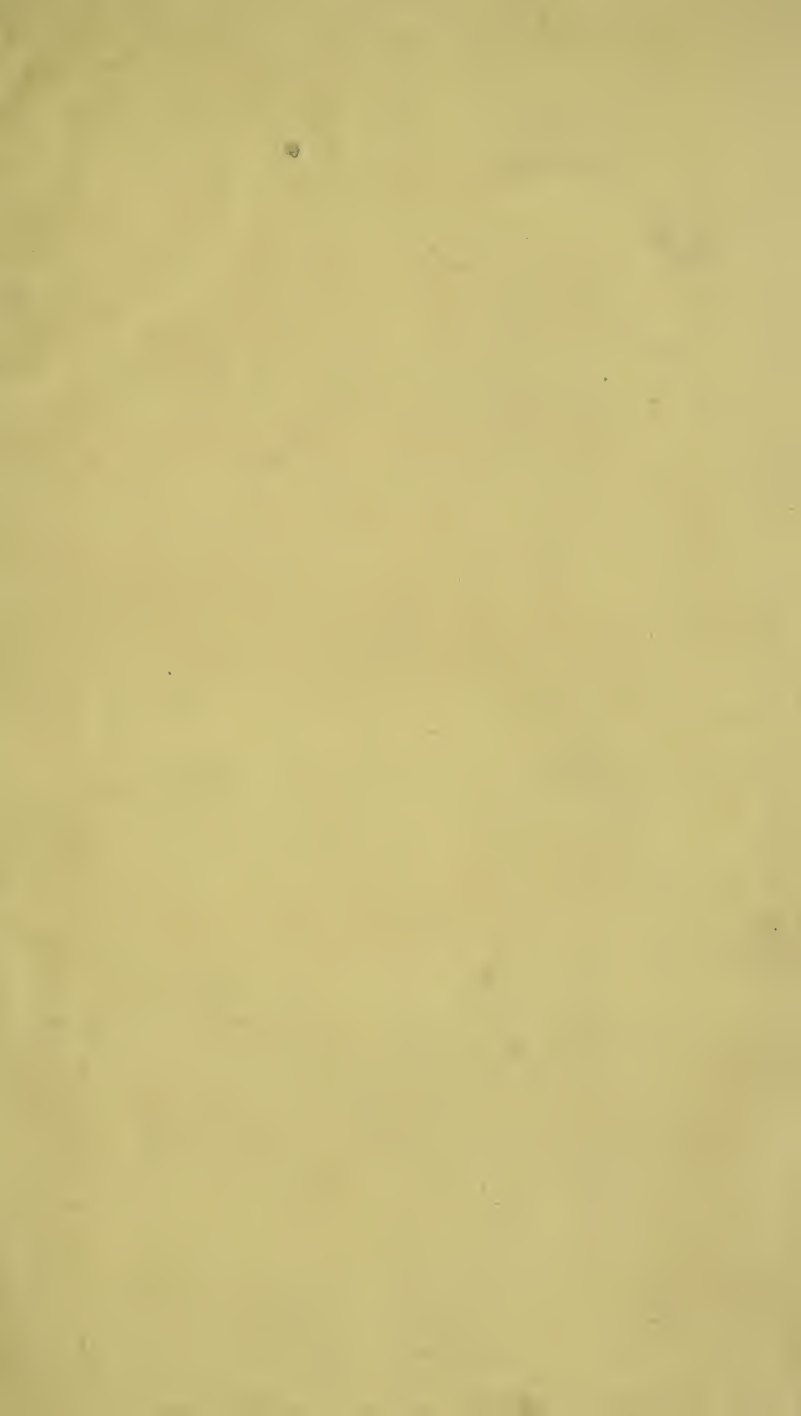


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THE
DOUBLE MARRIAGE,

A NOVEL.

BY
MRS. A. CRAWFORD,

AUTHORESS OF "THE LADY OF THE BEDCHAMBER."

"Little avails it now to know
Of ages passed so long ago,
Nor how they rolled;
Our theme shall be of yesterday,
Which to oblivion sweeps away,
Like days of old."!

E. Mockler

LONGFELLOW.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. III:

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THE

DOUBLE MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

“The church-yard bears an added stone,
The fire-side shows a vacant chair.”

NEELE.

REGRET for the good and kind Mrs. Neville was the predominant feeling of Mr. Morley and Julia, as they read in Grace's letter a short account of the foregoing incidents, and in the perusal of it they for a few moments forgot themselves.

VOL. III.

B

They were not blind to the advantage her marriage with General Craddock would be to her sisters and little brother ; yet while Julia saw it she could not repress a sigh, for she thought, “ Will Grace’s heart be in it ? ”

Grace mentioned her engagement with simplicity and feeling, dwelling upon the interest the General had taken in her beloved mother, and his delicate kindness towards her and her orphan brother and sisters.

They knew that his character stood high in her estimation, for she had spoken of him before as a resident in the neighbourhood, and a constant visitor at her mother’s.

Soon, however, Mr. Morley’s thoughts reverted to their own present position ; and as they sat before the almost untasted meal, which had been hastily served up, Julia thought of Grace, while he thought only of Julia, and how, although deprived of the

tender cares which he knew Mrs. Neville would have extended towards her, this marriage of Grace with General Craddock would take from the loneliness of the spot in which he was about to fix her.

Part of their journey was to be performed this day, and the carriage was soon ready.

Mr. Morley hurried Julia into it — then nurse and the baby. He closed the door without uttering a word, and sprung upon the seat beside the driver.

* * * * *

It was late on the evening of the third day when the party arrived at the primitive little village, where the Nevilles had taken up their residence.

Hilly roads and rough lanes had detained them longer than they had expected, and the stars were risen when, alighting from the carriage, they began to ascend the path

which wound up the side of the hill towards Grace's cottage.

Mr. Morley had so occupied himself with all the minutiae of preparation and arrangement attendant on travel since they left the steam vessel, that but little opportunity had occurred for conversation between him and Julia. In fact, he feared that his own agitation, if he did not constrain himself, would render her more ill and unfit than she evidently was for all exertion.

Perhaps he did not judge wisely in this, for it gave to his manners an air of coldness which was quite at variance with the tumult that reigned in his breast.

In the rustic porch of the thatched and low-roofed cottage, stood the kind, the gentle, the sympathising Grace Neville, ready to receive them; and as Julia was clasped in her fond embrace, she felt that she had in her a friend who would never forsake her.

Mr. Morley's voice was so broken that, as he took her hand in his, he could hardly thank her for the kindness with which she had endeavoured to meet his wishes and enter into his plans.

Grace said she was but too happy — the society of Julia and her boy was what she should most prize in the world—but would he not come in? Supper was ready—surely he was not going away without entering the cottage?

Mr. Morley had nerved himself for all this.

No, he could not stay — he would leave Julia in her care — he had a dreadful headache—he was going to the inn directly, but to-morrow — he would see them all to-morrow.

At these words Julia sunk upon the seat in the porch, unable to stand; her trembling limbs refused to support her.

All she heard or understood was, that Mr. Morley was not coming into the cottage—a faint scream burst from her lips. Mr. Morley caught her in his arms—one embrace, “my beloved! my Julia!” and he was gone.

“Julia! dear Julia! compose yourself,” exclaimed Grace, “you will see Mr. Morley to-morrow—he said to-morrow—do, dearest, come into the cottage. There! your little boy is crying—he misses you. Nurse! bring the child here to his mother. See! the little fellow is quite satisfied now, he was afraid his mother was gone. Come, Edmund, and kiss mamma, and tell her you want her to come in;” and so saying, Grace put the child in Julia’s arms.

The baby pressed its soft little lips to its mother’s cheek; a burst of tears relieved Julia, and rising, she carried it into the sitting room.

A bright fire was blazing. Emma and Lucy were standing by it with something of shyness in their manner, for they did not exactly understand what was going on. A small round table in the middle of the room was set out with tea, biscuits, cold meat, &c., and a bouquet of tastefully arranged flowers, selected from the prettiest in the garden, ornamented the centre of it.

Julia shook as if she had the ague, and her teeth chattered, although the room was quite warm.

She gave the baby to nurse, and tried to untie her bonnet strings, and take off her cloak, but her fingers trembled so violently that she could not do either.

Grace was frightened at the wild unsettled look in Julia's eyes, and said soothingly,

“To-morrow, dear Julia, Mr. Morley will come to-morrow — meantime, dear friend, you must try and calm yourself, and get a

good night's rest, or you will be too ill to see him."

"Too ill to see him! If I was dying, would you not let me see him, Grace? Oh! I must see him!" exclaimed Julia, and she clasped her hands together, and raised her eyes to heaven, as if entreating pity.

"Yes, dear Julia—yes, you shall see him certainly—I did not mean that—I only want you to compose yourself. It would break his heart if he saw you thus!—You would not like to give him so much pain. There! that's a dear girl.—You shall come with me, and I will show you your room, and bring you up some tea. You, dear Emma and Lucy—(speaking to the girls)—see that nurse and baby have some supper. Nurse! give little Edmund what is fit for him, and take care of yourself;" and so saying, Grace hurried her unfortunate friend to her room.

It was a pretty little apartment, containing a small French bedstead of cherry-tree wood, with white dimity hangings—chairs, table, and wardrobe to match. A Scotch carpet, a pretty hearth-rug of Grace's own needle-work, and a good fire, gave an air of great comfort to the room.

Close to the fire was drawn an easy chair, and on a small table beside it lay a large Bible.

A door at one end of the room communicated with the chamber which Grace had prepared for the nurse and her charge. Both those rooms were the girls' own sleeping apartments, but they had willingly given them up to their guests, and accommodated themselves as best they could in what had been their poor mother's sleeping room.

"I have had a fire put here, dear Julia," observed Grace, "although it is so early in the season, lest you might find it cold

amongst these hills. I do not think you will find it too warm to-night, for your hands feel quite chilled — there ! let me take off your bonnet and cloak, and sit down in the arm chair.”

“ Thank you dear Grace—I think I am better now,” said Julia, as she laid back in the arm chair ; “ but I am very faint still.”

“ You will be much better after you have had some tea,” returned Grace. “ I will just rub your temples with eau-de-cologne, and then bring you up a cup.”

The eau-de-cologne revived Julia a little, and Grace flew away for some tea.

Julia could not touch the tea—she seemed almost insensible, and scarcely spoke. Her kind friend got her to bed as soon as she could, and nurse brought in the baby to kiss mamma before he went to sleep. Grace thought that, were it not for the sight of the baby, no efforts of hers could have roused

Julia from the frightful stupor into which she had all at once sunk ; but this brought a passion of tears to her relief.

Grace sat beside Julia's bed until two o'clock, when, seeing that she had at last fallen into a sleep, she retired to her own room.

Julia did not sleep long, however ; she was up before the dawn, and watching from the latticed window for Mr. Morley.

Ill in mind and body, she gave but little heed to the picturesque view from her window.

Though situated a good way up the side of the hill, and having the valley beneath, hills rose above hills on every side, through which the windings of the defile might be traced to some distance, while the stream, which murmured over its pebbly bed in the bottom of the valley, made sweet music, mingling its brawling with the early song of birds.

The houses of the village were picturesquely scattered in the valley, and farm-houses were to be seen here and there, peeping out from amongst the hills.

The building which Grace had appropriated for her village school, was shut out from sight by a high bank and thick hedge-row, so it did not interfere in the least with the quiet and privacy of the abode.

All this, however, was lost upon the eye of Julia, who sat, with beating heart and burning brow, unconscious of any view but that of the lane which led to the bottom of the hill, where she had alit on the preceding night.

Thus she had sat for some time, when a soft tap at the door announced the approach of her kind friend. Grace was grieved to see her up, and, apparently, so excited; her colour was high, and her eye bright and unsteady, and Grace perceived directly that

she was hardly aware of a word she said to her ; all her thoughts, ears, and eyes, were concentrated on the lane.

“It is very early still, dear Julia,” observed Grace, gazing anxiously at her, “Mr. Morley would not think of disturbing you so early—you may be sure he will be here to breakfast.”

Julia looked at her with a pre-occupied air, but she did not speak, and turned towards the lane again.

Grace stood beside her for some minutes, pained and irresolute.

“There is some one coming at last,” exclaimed Julia, scarcely able to speak from agitation. “Look, Grace!—it is he—is it not?”

Grace fixed her eyes in the direction to which Julia pointed, and at first she thought it was Mr. Morley, but as the figure approached nearer, she perceived it was a peasant.

“No, it is not he,” said Julia, with a deep sigh. “But what does that man want?—I wonder what he wants—he is coming this way.”

“It is only a labourer going to his work, dear Julia,” replied Grace.

“He has turned up the lane in this direction—see! he is coming in at the gate.—Oh, Heavens! he has got a letter in his hand,” exclaimed Julia.

“Be calm, dear Julia, be calm!” said Grace. “It is most probably for me—I will go down and see.”

But Julia had started up, and rushing past her, reached the cottage door as the man approached.

She held out her hand for the letter. He gave it to her—the direction was for her.—She tore it open—read three or four words, and fell senseless on the ground.

The letter was from Mr. Morley. He could not bear the pain of parting. It would have killed both her and himself, he said. He was gone.

CHAPTER II.

“The sun grows pale ;
A mournful visionary light o’erspreads
The cheerful face of nature ; earth becomes
A dreary desert——”

ARMSTRONG.

AN access of fever followed this violent shock, and for many days Grace watched beside the bed of her poor friend.

In her delirium, a horrid phantom seemed constantly to haunt her ; and in her more calm moments, it was with much difficulty that Grace was able to persuade her that she alone watched in her room.

Youth, and a naturally good constitution, at last triumphed over the disorder; and Grace had the pleasure of writing to Mr. Morley, who kept up a daily correspondence with her, that the poor sufferer was able to come down to the sitting-room.

From the moment the fever had left her, and that she could in the least degree recall her wandering senses, her sole thought, her sole anxiety, was about the letter which had at first so pierced her heart.

This letter, in which Mr. Morley had poured out all the feelings of his soul, until then so carefully pent up—this letter, in which his adieus, so tender, so passionate, so heart-broken, more than made up for the estrangement that she had fancied in him for the last few days—was hidden beneath her pillow—treasured, dwelt upon, and read over and over a hundred times, and hundreds of times afterwards. It was her

greatest solace—something to brood over, to dwell upon—something to be always uppermost in her thoughts, even before her child.

He would watch over her, and guard her, and meet her wishes in every thing that was in his power. He would be her guide, her protector, her friend, while he breathed. No other should ever bear his name, or take her place in his heart.

He must be the depository of all her thoughts and feelings—she must write to him constantly, it was the only consolation he should have left.

Thus he wrote, and her poor heart was soothed for a while. She could not as yet realize her separation from him.

* * * * *

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Julia's cottage was soon in order to receive her, and though Grace affectionately

pressed her to remain where she was for a little time longer, she could not think of trespassing upon kindness, which had put itself to great inconvenience to make out accommodation for her in so small a space. She therefore took up her residence in her own house, although with a languid spirit and a heavy heart.

This change made but little difference to her in point of society, for it was nearly the same as if they had inhabited one abode. But there was something in the idea of thus dwelling for ever by herself, that overwhelmed her with the deepest melancholy.

It was in vain that she sat in the porch, and gazed upon the smiling landscape, around, while her baby boy clung to her side, and lavished on her his infantine caresses. It was in vain that the young Nevilles crowded round her, trying to anticipate her wishes, and to divert her thoughts.

Day by day her melancholy did but

deepen. She could not teach herself resignation, and the aspirations and prayers which she had so lately learned to put up to Heaven, died upon her tongue. Mr. Morley was no longer near her ; his letters were but few, and a black despair was beginning to take possession of her heart.

The storm had passed over the flower, and laid it prostrate on the ground, and no gleam of sunshine could raise its drooping head.

Why did he not write to her now, as he had written in the letter which she always kept in her bosom ? Why were his letters so cold and short ? Did he already begin to forget her ?

Alas ! she knew not that he feared to trust his pen—he did not dare to tell her that he was even more unhappy than herself—that he saw now there was no chance, not the slightest, of their ever being reunited.

The best opinions had been taken—the first lawyers had been consulted—it was a hopeless case. He had told himself over and over again that there was no hope—but he had hoped.

CHAPTER III.

“ Poi le fece veder come non fusse,
Alcun, se non in Dio, vero contento
E ch’ eran l’ altre, transitorie, e flusse,
Sperazne umane, edi poco momento.”

ARIOSTO.

EMMA and Lucy, although both so young, assisted Grace so well in the labours of her school, as to enable her, for the first week or two after Julia’s arrival, to give up most part of her time to her ; and when she thought it necessary to return to her school duties, the good old Curate took it upon himself to pay a daily visit to the invalid.

The character of the Reverend Evans

Griffith has been sketched before, and we need scarcely add that though his Christian views, extensive charity, deep research into the Scriptures, and unaffected piety, would have graced a mitre; yet he was contented with the humble walk of life in which Providence had placed him, and endeavouring to instruct the old and young in his flock, and to do all the good in his power, with the steady eye of faith pursued a pilgrimage now nearly at its close.

He had found in Grace and her sisters a good foundation already laid, upon which to build that child-like dependence upon God—that submission and humble thankfulness under all His dispensations, which, acknowledging that He who is wisdom cannot err, and that He who is goodness cannot be harsh with his children, submits with humility and singleness of heart, and an endeavour to make the best of every thing, to whatever He wills,

considering the thorns and briars, the crosses and cares which obstruct their path through life, as the cords which are to draw their ~~hands~~ towards Him.

But in Julia he did not meet with this foundation. Naturally of a kind and good disposition, but volatile and thoughtless, a religious education would have tempered the former and repressed the latter ; but in her early days, except in going through a certain set of established forms, she had not given religion any thought—it had never been properly inculcated. If prayer was gone through at stated periods, it was as a formality.

“ Our Father, which art in heaven,” was daily repeated ; but did she ever reflect upon the privilege of being permitted to address so august a Being ? Did this prayer make her feel the beautiful dependence of a child upon a parent ? Did she think upon the

inexpressible, the inexhaustible happiness which this Almighty Father, "Our Father," was preparing for the obedient child? Never.

The earthly world, fair, bright, fascinating—hiding still more charms in its futurity than the present developed—was always flitting and fading, glancing and brightening, before her vivid imagination. But the other world—the eternity of hereafter, never made a part of her contemplations.

The most amiable impulses, and the finest qualities, are of no avail, without the guiding power of religion, to stem the encroachments of error; and thus it was that Julia, candid and generous as was her disposition, allowed herself to be blinded, and led by an earthly parent's wishes, to stoop to a deceit which not only planted her own pillow with thorns, and made her married life a perpetual scene of internal struggle, but threw a dark shadow

over the remaining years of a good man's life : for her heart told her, as truly as his lips and pen had done, that though the tie was broken which had bound him to her, he would never form another.

Since Mr. Morley's discovery of the dreadful predicament in which she was placed, it is true the only consolation she had had, was from the newly-awakened religious feelings which were springing up in her bosom ; but they were as yet but like the faint blue clouds, no bigger than a speck, which are seen struggling amidst the intense darkness of a stormy sky. Since she had been separated from Mr. Morley, hope had died, and despondency reigned supreme. Her sick heart refused to acknowledge the hand of a heavenly Father, in the chastisement she had received. If she could only see him sometimes—but never to see him !

She could not recall her prayerful feelings

from which she had at first derived such consolation. A neophyte still, she had to wrestle with contending passions.

The sight of one so young and so utterly desponding—one so little advanced in her pilgrimage, which, although an early death might shorten, might yet be extended to a number of years, filled the good Curate's breast with pity and commiseration.

He saw that some sharp arrow rankled deep in the heart of this young creature, and, though ignorant of the cause, he knew that religion alone could find a salve for the wound.

He was not long in insinuating himself into the confidence of the unhappy Julia. She heard of his worth, she saw his active benevolence, she was aware that even where he condemned he pitied; and as the sunflower expands under the cheering rays of the sun, so did her crushed heart revive

beneath the influence of his gentle admonitions, and it was not long before she opened her grief to him, and told him her sad story.

The good man listened to her with tears in his eyes. Purified himself in the crucible of misfortune, he had a pitying tear ever ready for the miseries of others. His treasure was in Heaven, and his heart there also, but his human sympathies were on earth.

He saw the die was cast, and that she was irrevocably separated in this world from the man she fondly loved, and who so well deserved that love.

The knot that united her to M'Donnell could not be broken, although no law of morality forbade the step she had taken, of concealing herself from him. Human consolation was vain ; but eternity was before her, and there she might meet again the husband of her choice.

Humble himself, pitiful and compassionate while he blained, he did not break the bruised reed.

“My child,” said he, “a want of truth has been the foundation of all your misfortunes. I pass over the error of your parent in exacting such a concealment from you. In obeying him, you forgot the greater duty which was due to God—you forgot what you owed to yourself and to your intended husband. Bitterly have you been punished for it. Nevertheless, you must consider that you have many blessings left. Your child calls for all your care and attention. For his sake you must try and exert yourself—make his young mind truthful and sincere. Truth, simple and unadulterated, is beautiful as the pearls which form each of the twelve gates of the holy Jerusalem—clear and fair as the pure gold, like unto transparent glass, with which that holy city

is builded ; and recollect, that within those walls nothing that loveth or maketh a lie is to enter.”

Julia listened and wept, and felt that even in reproof the old man was kind.

Then she pressed her baby to her heart, and thought with what care she would bring him up, and how Grace, who was so much better taught than herself, should help her to educate him.

Time, that great softener of the evils of life, brought composure to Julia. Higher studies began, by degrees, to occupy her mind, and more expansive thoughts to overshadow her soul. Happiness in this world was no longer to be expected. To pass her days in peace and retirement, far from the sight of the man who claimed her as his wife, was all she dared to look for ; but as her hopes in the present life became more bounded, a future one opened its perspective before her.

Why should she think so much of this world, when a boundless eternity lay beyond it? Had she not confessed all her past faults and follies, her sins of omission and commission, to her God? Did she not begin to feel that she was always in his presence, and that his hand was supporting her—that he was becoming to her the high rock, to which she might cling, amidst the sea of troubles that environed her?

Yes, she felt all this; and if it had not been so, her heart must have broken.

Those experiences and convictions did not burst upon her all at once—they were the fruits of supplication and prayer. Neither were they always present with her; feelings of the deepest despondency often took possession of her soul, and in those times the study of the Bible, with solitude and prayer, was her best refuge.

She tried not to extenuate her fault—she

brought not the salvo of a parent's wishes, or her own youth and thoughtlessness, to appease a condemning conscience. No—she had acted a lie—she had stood before the altar as Julia Grahame, when that name no longer belonged to her ; and what saith the Scriptures ?

CHAPTER IV.

“ I dolci colli ov’ io lasciai me stesso
Partendo onde partir giammai non posso
Mi vanno innanzi ; ed emmi ognor addosso
Quel caro peso ch’ Amor m’ ha commesso.”

PETRARCA.

MEANTIME, Mr. Morley was in London, wretched and lonely. No hope remained to him of being able to break a marriage so valid and well attested as was Julia’s with M‘Donnell.

The only consolation he had—if consolation it could be called—was the knowledge that the latter, deceived partly by accident, and partly by the endeavours of Mr. Morley

to lead him astray, had taken the route into Italy in pursuit of Julia.

This satisfied him of the security of the retreat in which he had placed her—at least for the present; and he determined to throw such further information in the pursuer's way, as would lead him to suppose that those he sought had taken refuge at St. Petersburg.

These plans occupied his mind in part, but he felt that some strong effort was necessary, in order to regain the mastery of himself, and prevent his mind from dwelling almost to madness upon the late events.

To obtain this object he turned to society, and sought to forget Julia by entering into a world which, in his youngest and most thoughtless days, had never had any charms for him. But the experiment only disgusted him.

He was constantly, in spite of himself,

drawing comparisons between Julia and every woman he met with. Not in her beauty, for in his eyes that was faultless, but in her mind.

When he beheld the coquetry, the love of admiration, the vapidness and selfishness of other women, he recollected Julia's simplicity, native wit, and freedom from vanity. When he saw the little discords, the petty disagreements, the love of rule evinced by the wives of some of his friends, he contrasted it with her devotion, and remembered how she had studied his every wish and look.

Julia's image only became more powerful with this commerce with the world, and, depressed and disheartened, he rushed back to his solitude, and sought to find relief amongst his books.

Vain attempt! The wisdom of the ancients, and the maxims of their sages and

philosophers, were alike unable to divert or allay the fever of his mind. He turned over their pages with a preoccupied imagination, and when he laid aside the book, he forgot what he had been reading. It was seldom that any thing struck him as new ; all seemed worn out, old, and vapid.

Yet he did not give up ; again he tried to extract some alleviation to his misery from the works of the philosophers, but he thought not of studying the Book where he could alone find comfort.

Still he struggled in vain ; and crushed with the blow which had fallen upon him, he left London, and retired to the old mansion house, to madden himself with revolving the past, and meditation upon the future.

Julia, torn from his arms, was become dearer to him than ever—but her honour and fame were still dearer. His boy—the beautiful !—the long-wished for !—he who

was to have been the heir to his estates, now no more so, but still beloved—when should he see him again?

How fill up the dreary void made by the absence of those dear objects? His literary pursuits were insipid, his walks hateful—the face of all nature was changed to him.

Where the anxious occupation of watching the lights and shades of that beautiful face—the varying spirits—the starting tear, all so distractingly accounted for now? Where the joy when her eye brightened, and her smile gladdened his heart? Gone, all gone!

If the tomb had taken his beloved from him, he would have sorrowed, but he would have borne up against it. It was not thus she was lost. Earth held her still among the living, but not for him.

In imagination, he saw her in the deep valley where he had hidden her, surrounded

by hills on every side, which seemed to shut her out from the world.

He saw her moving slowly and pensively along, with his little boy at her side—that child!—If he could even have kept his child with him—but he could not take him from Julia.

Thus did he muse almost to distraction for several weeks, during which time Grace wrote to him constantly. Julia could not make up her mind to write herself, and he did not dare to press it now—he almost feared to see her hand-writing. At last a letter came from her. It was agony to him at first, yet he felt he was not quite so miserable after he had read it, and soon another came.

She made him the repository of all her self-reproaches, her penitence, and her tears. Yet, while her letters almost broke his heart, there was a spirit in them that brought con-

solation with it. She wrote to him of the new views which were opening upon her. She talked to him of brighter worlds, of another and a happier life — of that eternity where they would be for ever together, when their pilgrimage upon this earth was past.

If in her fault she had deeply sinned against him, in her humility she exceeded. Perhaps he was disappointed that she never expressed a wish to see him, but he felt that she was right.

Sometimes he was surprised at the tone of her letters ; there was in them an elevation of sentiment, and an expansion of intellect, which he had not looked for in his tender, timid Julia.

He was not then aware that nothing elevates the soul so much above the trivialities of life, as the cultivation of religious feelings.

Mr. Morley was more unhappy than Julia. She could throw herself into the arms of Grace, and breathe her sighs upon that pitying breast. She could talk over her errors and misfortunes with the good Curate, and, guided by his gentle counsel, learn to look beyond the grave. But Mr. Morley's proud heart would not open itself to any one. Cold, silent, and reserved, he was alone with himself. The past and present were ever before him—he had not yet learned to fix his thoughts upon the future.

He had no occupation but to turn from one shelf to another in his library—to take down a book, try to read a few pages, and put it up again. He had re-arranged them in the old style in which they had been when he was a bachelor—placed every thing in the same order as before the room was new-modelled, and confined himself entirely to the apartments which he had been used to inhabit in former days.

He could not bear to enter into the new ones—they had been prepared for Julia.

But all would not do ; there is nothing so hard as to learn to forget.

One day, as he was listlessly turning over a page or two of one of the old heathen writers, he accidentally stumbled upon a quotation from Longinus, in which the latter mentions having discovered, among a people called the Jews, a book which, for loftiness of sentiment, fine imagery, and poetical beauty, was unrivalled.

Mr. Morley was startled at this opinion, propounded by such a master-critic. There lay the old family Bible on the shelf, with its massive silver clasps, being almost the only book he had not opened.

He was a regular attendant at church, and heard it read there every Sunday. Had he thought that his religious belief was imperfect, or that his tenets were unsound, he

might, perhaps, have looked into it for confirmation of his hopes, or a contradiction of his scruples. But no, he had gone through life believing himself to be a sound churchman ; assenting to all the doctrines inculcated by the Church of England, and giving, like many other people, but little thought to the subject. He considered the Bible with reverence, and looked upon the doctrines of the Christian faith as suitable to every condition of humanity.

The Bible was a book to be prized, and held in the highest respect ; no house should be without one.

If he had reflected upon the subject, it was in some such way as this that he would have expressed himself ; but the truth was, though such ideas seemed almost innate in his mind, he had never expressed them.

But to read the Bible, as a man of letters would read an ancient and celebrated work,

to seek therein for all that the human soul can imagine of loftiness of expression, rhetorical beauty, poetical inspiration, exquisite pathos and grandeur of thought, had never entered into his imagination.

He read the passage again, and it seemed to him as if a new path in the world of intellect, which he had not yet trod, was opened before him—some vista of the soul into another region of poetry and sublimity, than that which lay in the piles of volumes around him, offering a refuge to his parched spirit, for a little time, from its haunting memories ; and turning to the Bible, he took it down, and laying it upon the table, opened it by chance at the song of Deborah, on the discomfiture and death of Sisera.

The passage describing the mother of Sisera sitting at the window and looking for her son, struck him on the instant for simplicity and poetic beauty, and opening

other parts of the holy book, here and there, he was more and more astonished at its superiority—taking it simply as a literary work—over any other composition.

It was a new study, and he caught at it with eagerness, as a resource against the lassitude and sensation of misery which was creeping more and more over him every day.

A new study!—Had he not listened to it from his youth upwards?—His tongue had learned to lisp it when a child; all Christian children learn it, and every Sunday—for he was a regular churchman—he heard a portion of it read in church.

This was certainly the case, and yet it was—as it is with many others—a new study.

We hang with rapture over the beauties of our poets, ancient and modern, and yet the exquisite poetical touches in the Bible

never strike us. We dwell not upon the majesty of its conceptions, the profound pathos of its narrations, and the melting tenderness of its appeals.

Our eyes fill with tears over a passage of Shakspeare or of Byron; and we hear the narrative of her who loved much, and to whom much was forgiven, and the passionate entreaties to return unto God, without evincing any emotion. The harp of David vibrates not in our ear, and the prophets pour forth their streams of poesy in vain.

This is considering it as a human composition; but as a divine inspiration, how ought the soul, longing and thirsting after immortality, to refresh itself with its pure fountains of living waters, and revel amidst its reviving promises!

Mr. Morley soon found the benefit of his new course of study. If his keen relish for the higher beauties of composition was

gratified, and his mind stored with beautiful imagery, the prospect of a futurity—and that of one so near as it is to us all,—gradually opening and fixing itself before his mental vision, calmed and soothed his spirit.

What is that point in our existence called life, compared to an eternity? What the separation of two beings for a few years—it may be only months or days, on earth, to a union for ever and ever?

The Christian dispensation, with its hopes and promises, had, until now, floated before his mind as a beautiful theory, rather than a reality, and while its doctrines were professed, it had never touched his heart; but now his soul seemed to exert her native powers, and, denizen of another world, to long to pierce into its depths.

And if the Bible showed him the sad corruption of human nature in its true light—the worthlessness and wickedness, the

moral depravity and baseness of fallen man ; it disclosed to him at the same time what must have been the original physical and intellectual greatness of him who was made in the image and likeness of God, and so dearly beloved by that Creator who formed him, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world to die for his redemption.

Was it not a prize worth striving for—to regain this intellectual and physical greatness, and to dwell for ever in the presence of the Creator ? Could any self-denial or humility be too much for such an end ? Might not the weariest of earthly pilgrimages be borne, which led to such attainment ?

When the world smiles upon us, we are but too often careless Christians. It is frequently misfortune that draws us to God. It may be our worldly possessions that we lose ; or it may be the death of a dear one, the cherished idol of our souls. Or,

oh ! worse than all—it may be the uprooting and tearing away, the dashing to pieces of every fragment of the structure on which was founded our earthly happiness—a sort of living death. And thus it was with Mr. Morley.

CHAPTER V.

“ This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
Life’s theatre as yet is shut, and death,
Strong death alone, can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us embryos of existence free.”

YOUNG.

MR. MORLEY now directed himself entirely to theological pursuits.

From the Bible he turned to the writings of our fine old divines. They were to him as a fair and untrodden land — a mine of gold, rich and inexhaustible, into which he had never pierced before, and he began the study of them with the same intense de-

votion which he had bestowed in early years upon other branches of literature.

These pursuits calmed and elevated his mind, though they could not prevent the late shock he had received, from making serious inroads on his health.

Perhaps indisposition is more favourable than health to religious pursuits. As Jeremy Taylor says, “in sickness the soul begins to dress herself for immortality”—prepares to put off her mean and corruptible habit, and put on her robes of glory.

* * * *

Although great was the pleasure which Mr. Morley had in writing to Julia, and in receiving her letters, he found that he must not indulge himself too often in it, as it quite unnerved him.

Julia wept at first over this self-denial, and the calm un-impassioned epistle which

he sent her once a fortnight, sometimes tortured, more than it eased, her heart. But on a second perusal she generally found there was something in it to dwell upon—some tender question—some word of interest in her or the boy, to calm her fears.

To think that Morley could forget her, would have killed her.

On her part, she continued to write every thing to him—her hopes—her fears—her new views—all about her boy; but this last always tortured him, though it chafed him if she forgot to mention him. When she talked to him of the good Curate—of the books he furnished her with, and begged of him to try and get them and read them too—of her hours of prayer, which she endeavoured to regulate to the exact time that she thought he would pray likewise—her words fell upon his heart like the dews of heaven upon the scathed grass.

He recognised that sympathy of soul which had always united them, and saw that, like himself, his beloved tried to point her steps heaven-ward — to that heaven where he hoped again to meet his Julia

And Julia was travelling thither. She had turned to that only consolation which could bring peace to her agitated spirit, and bind up her bruised heart — frequent and earnest prayer.

She had begun by using the beautiful compositions written by our venerable teachers, Jeremy Taylor, Stanhope, Andrews, &c.; but though she found in those books petitions fitted to almost every accident of life, she soon learned to add to them her own ardent supplications, flowing from the depths of her soul. If her agony, her prayers, her tears were deep and intense— if the poor heart felt bursting from the weight of its errors and its sorrows, the

greater degree of calm was diffused into it afterwards, and the poor Julia learned that the privilege of prayer — of knowing that petitions ever so imperfectly expressed, are heard by a Being omniscient, omnipotent, all wisdom, all goodness — a Being who allows his humblest, most dejected, most forlorn of created souls to address him by the endearing title of “Father,” is one of the greatest privileges which we mortals can have. .

What! shall we be proud and elated at being allowed to address ourselves personally to the high and mighty of the earth, and shall not a communion with the most high God be prized by us? How does the heart leap with joy if an earthly potentate offers us protection and patronage! and is there no joy to be felt at the idea that a merciful Creator is always watching over us?

Thus meditated Julia, after she had wept oceans of tears for her faults, and felt that grace was growing in her heart.

She was in the hands of a good God, and in that heaven to which she now aspired she would be again united to Mr. Morley. No, they were never more to meet upon earth; but, next to God, she depended upon his watchful care, and her heart told her that weak, fond, and infirm of purpose as she was, she must look to him for support in this separation.

And he did support her. He never told her that, despite his masculine mind, his firm resolve, his endeavours to dissipate his thoughts by study, his health was failing.

The tempest rends up the oak from the roots, and lays it prostrate on the earth, while the fragile honeysuckle that twined round it, is only bent and torn, and may be raised again.

Generally speaking, women are more religiously inclined than men. Dependent, from their youth upwards, upon the stronger sex, that constant looking towards God which religion enjoins, is more congenial to their hearts.

Subject themselves, from the more delicate organization of their frames, to various ailments — obliged to be nurses in sickness, and attendants upon the bed of death, their minds, endued with less strength, could never display that passive fortitude which they often exhibit, were it not that they seek for support where it is always to be found.

An irreligious woman is a sort of anomaly in creation ; and in all ages, men the most careless in their habits, and the most destitute in their minds, have respected religious feelings in their wives—even if, from their own disbelief, they may have looked

upon them as prejudices, as the greatest safeguards of their honour, and the most conducive to their happiness.

Frequently has the believing wife converted the unbelieving husband.

Julia's enthusiasm therefore, and her anxiety to place every thing before Mr. Morley in the same light that she was learning to consider it herself, became an additional incentive to him to pursue deeper and deeper the subject which he had in hand, and by degrees his letters, taking the tone of his studies, assumed a different character.

Calm and unimpassioned to the mistress of his heart, as related to earthly objects, they caught something of a celestial fire from the indwelling thoughts that were day by day struggling to soar into other realms, and Julia no longer wept over his coldness as he tried to make her a sharer in his views of what a future life might be.

Thus did he express himself in one of his letters :—

“ Wherefore, my best beloved, should we weep over the short separation to which we are doomed in this life? Why think of the abyss that divides us? Vague and indistinct as are the glimpses which Scripture affords of this our land of promise, still are they sufficient to fill the mind with an indescribable longing after those celestial abodes.

“ Reason tells us that whatever is beautiful in creation, being the handy work of an Almighty artificer, must be collected together a thousand times more lovely in that spot which he is said peculiarly to inhabit.

“ What indeed must be the transcendent splendour, the exquisite attraction of that Heaven, where the Almighty has fixed his throne—where the glorified body of our Saviour resides, and the innumerable hosts

of angels sing their hallelujahs? Scripture, while it endeavours to bring the happiness prepared for those who do the will of God, within our earthly capacities, by giving us the beautiful description of the heavenly Jerusalem, where ‘God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away,’—tells us in another part, ‘That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.’

“And how must everything prepared by the Almighty God, who knows all the secret powers and faculties of the soul which he has created, ravish and delight that soul when set free from its tenement of clay! It is probable that we shall carry with us the delicacy of taste—the harmony of sounds

—the beauty of colours—the fragrance of odoriferous smells. Our knowledge and virtue will be perfected, and our happiness rendered ecstatic by our being present continually with God, and with all the happy spirits who surround his throne. We shall be happy, for we shall be in the possession of all that can gratify and content the soul; and this shall be continued to us for ever and ever. And what is it that can content the soul? Nothing but a restoration to what it was when man first came from the hands of his Maker, formed in the image and likeness of God.

“Have we it in contemplation, my Julia, to visit some foreign country, how eager are we to gain information about it, and how do we please ourselves before-hand, with the prospect of having our curiosity gratified! It is therefore natural that we should meditate upon, and search into, what it is that

our future inheritance promises—that inheritance guaranteed to us upon our performing certain conditions, and the covenant of which is sealed by the blood of that Saviour, who has taken the punishment due to our sins upon himself, and died for our redemption.”

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Again he wrote in another :—

“There was a large rout last night at my cousin Lord L—’s, where I have been staying for a day or two.

“Indeed I could not well refuse his invitation, as he came over himself, on purpose to fetch me ; though I think I should have run the risk of offending him by a refusal, had I known of the gaiety he had in prospect. The scene was altogether so dissonant to my feelings, that I stole away just before midnight, when they were in the midst of

it,—all seemingly full of excitement and merriment—and sought a copse wood, not far from the house, on the edge of which a clump of hazel trees shadow a little green spot of soft, smooth sward. I think I told you of this spot, and how as a boy, when on a visit to my uncle's, I used to throw myself on it and dream for hours—day-dreams I mean.

“It was so calm with the moonbeams playing on it through the hazel boughs, that I thought when I arrived there, and seated myself upon a rude stump, how happy it would be—even as I stole away from the garish lights and gaudy dresses—to steal thus from life and lie beneath that spot, with the green sod pressing lightly on my breast.

“Thus much for my mortal frame, but my spirit, Julia!—my spirit, freed from the clogs of mortality, would take its flight to

another region, and wait for thee there—not lost to thee, but gone before.

“Now that I have taken those matters into consideration, the thoughts of eternity afford me an unspeakable delight.

“For what, my Julia, in many cases would life be but a living death, if the grave was to be an oblivion to us of all hopes and memories ?

“No—reason tells us, that a being endowed with such a wonderful capacity of feeding, as it were, upon the past, and calling up in an instant events and feelings, over which Time in vain rolls his oblivious waves as he passes on ; a being who, while memory thus looks back perpetually, has hope to look forward with, hope, ever cheering, ever bright, boundless as the ocean that girds our globe—cannot be made for annihilation ; and being immortal—should we so live, so die, as to achieve the heaven that awaits us,

we shall, no doubt, carry thither with us all the best gifts of this life, purified and washed from the pollutions of clay.

“Neither is this so gloomy a subject, my Julia, as it may appear to you at first. Nothing ought to be more joyful to the mind than the contemplation of immortality. The thought that we shall one day burst from this chrysalis of clay, and satisfy that burning curiosity, that ardent thirst for knowledge which so many of us feel, is fraught with a secret satisfaction.

“The first step we take out of our bodies will open before us that beautiful and invisible world, which this barrier of flesh now hides from us.

“If, as Milton says,

‘Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth ·

Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep ;’

we shall be in the midst of them the instant the struggle is over. Neither will the soul

be for ever parted from her old companion, the body, for ‘this corruptible shall put on incorruption,’ at the appointed time ; and retaking her old garments, renewed and glorified, the soul shall wear them for evermore, without spot or stain.”

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One more extract from Mr. Morley’s letters :—

“ I continue to find an increasing source of interest in my study of the sacred writings, dear Julia.

“ ‘The Hebrew idioms run into the English tongue with a particular grace and beauty,’ Addison remarks, in one of his papers ; and that it is so is evident, for how noble and poetical is the prose version of the Psalms, under all the disadvantages of a translation !

“Some parts of the Bible are models of impassioned narration; a beautiful simplicity reigns pre-eminent in others—here, a lofty eloquence elevates the thoughts above the world — in another place, some passage (witness the lamentation of David over his beloved Jonathan) breathes the utmost pathos, and fills the heart with melting tenderness.

“I fully agree with the opinion which that great oriental scholar and accomplished writer, Sir William Jones, has expressed of the superiority of the Bible over every other composition, and which I accidentally met with the other day; it is as follows, being a note in his own hand-writing, written at the end of his Bible :—

“ ‘ I have,’ says he, ‘ regularly and attentively read these Holy Scriptures; and I am of opinion, that this volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more

true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed.'

"It is this book, my Julia, that assures us of a future existence; and again I repeat, what would earth be without such a prospect?

"Let us consider what generations after generations have trod its surface since its creation. Millions upon millions of living, breathing, sentient human beings, endued with minds and hearts capable of being agonized by all the passions which, like the waves of the ocean, ebb and swell in the soul of man—formed with the same exquisite tracery of nerves, the same liability to suffer under bodily pain, to writhe under mental torture, as those who now tread its

surface ; and to think that every one of those exists, and has existed, with thoughts, feelings, sensations, all differing from each other—no two exactly alike ; and that not one has ever arrived at the end of his existence—be his outward appearance ever so untroubled by care, or his path through life look ever so dazzling and prosperous—without some secret regret, some gnawing anxiety, some false step never to be re-trod again, lying a black spot, a ceaseless torment, in the depths of his heart—a bitter drop in the dregs of his cup.

“ Some never-satisfied wish, clung to the closer for its disappointment—some never-to-be-fulfilled hope, grasped at the more anxiously for its impossibility.

“ Oh, life ! thou wouldst be a weary burden, were it not for the sure prospect of a happy immortality before us !

“Something for the sick heart to rest upon—the weary eye to turn to. .

“Something to be longed for, as the hart longeth for the water-brooks.”

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CHAPTER VI.

“Some love the manly foils ;
The tennis some ; and some the graceful dance.”

ARMSTRONG.

GENERAL CRADDOCK had returned to his residence, and, anxious to establish a right of attending to all the comforts of the young Nevilles, and to release the girls from what he considered the drudgery of attending to the school, pressed his gentle Grace to fulfil her engagement, and ratify at the altar the promise which she had made him before her mother's death. Knowing the anxiety that her dear mother had to see her united

to the General, and how much the prospect of it had cheered the latter days of her life, Grace at length consented to name the time, although two months were still unexpired of the year of mourning, and a few weeks only intervened before the day that was to make her the wife of one whom she thought of, and with justice, as the most worthy of men.

On his return home, Grace had confided to him, by Julia's desire, her unhappy history, and thus gained for her another kind and efficient friend and protector ; yet every time that Julia saw the General in the midst of the little circle,—while it augmented her respect and veneration for the goodness which became more apparent as her acquaintance with him increased,—she fancied that she had more and more reason to imagine that Grace, though calm, contented, and prepared to fulfil all the duties of an

affectionate wife, had still something to struggle with,—some old memories to repress, that would present themselves, unwished-for and unbidden, before her.

A word, a look, an expression of affection from the old Indian, sometimes made Grace colour, sometimes start, — sometimes turn pale.

As a friend, it was evident she would have been delighted to see him every day—nay, almost every hour—and to have lavished on him the cares of the most attentive of daughters ; but as a husband——

“Still he is so good !” thought Julia, “and Grace is so grateful, and looks up to him so much, that I think she cannot fail of being happy. Once his wife, and no memories of former times will intrude.”

And Julia became more satisfied of this, as the appointed day drew near.

She observed that Grace had begun to

listen to him with equanimity, and to discuss future plans—she perceived how overwhelmed she was with happiness, at the handsome provision he was making for her two sisters and her little brother. To the settlements on herself, being every thing else he possessed — although she thanked him for his care of her with a sweet smile—Julia saw she did not give a thought.

The General did not talk a great deal to Grace ; he used to sit with both hands leaning on his cane, and look at her as if she was something celestial. Emma seemed to be his great confidant, and was never weary of listening to him and conversing with him. She would make him relate to her over and over again, the strange adventures and privations which he had met with in those remote parts of India where he was years without beholding a white face, with histories of Thugs and Begums — the

marvellous splendour of the barbaric courts, and a thousand other realities wilder than romance ; while Lucy, who was become very fond of him, hung about him as if he was an old grandpapa.

Harry had always something to show him when he came, or something to ask for. Now it was — would he bring him a new ball next time ? — or, he wanted a bat — or, he would so like a humming-top !

The General never forgot their little wants. Books for Emma — Indian nicnacs for Lucy — playthings for Harry, constantly crammed his pockets.

He had brought them all a quantity of handsome presents when he first came — expensive shawls, silk dresses, jewelry, &c., which the two younger girls found great pleasure in displaying to Julia.

It was now within a few days of that one

to which the General looked forward with a pardonable pride and satisfaction.

Grace Neville was to be his own — that fair and spotless being, whose outward show was but an emblem of her inward purity— she who seemed to wend her way amidst the troubles of life, as the moon glides calmly on through the black clouds of night, had promised to be his friend, his companion, his wife, and to gild his declining years with her sweet society.

Every thing had been arranged to Grace's perfect satisfaction. The good Curate was to tie the knot. Emmy and Lucy were to be the bride's maids, and found full and pleasant occupation in arranging their pretty dresses. Harry declared that he would be the brideman. The General smiled as the happy little fellow whispered his determination, and whispered to him, in return, that he should have a companion, as a friend

was coming from Cheltenham, whom he intended to lay an embargo on for the wedding day.

Who was this friend? Certainly it must be Colonel Talbot, thought Emmy and Lucy, when Harry, with his rosy face and laughing eyes full of importance, repeated to them the intelligence.

Lucy was delighted at the idea — she wished so to see the father of young Talbot, who, from the recommendation of the General, had been reading for the last two months with Mr. Evans Griffith, preparatory to his being launched into life as a cadet.

The shy school-boy of former days had grown up into a clever youth, still, however, retaining a great deal of nervous diffidence, and grave to a fault. But neither gravity or nervous shyness could withstand the playful archness of Lucy Neville, and the village of ——— wore a much gayer

aspect to her since his arrival at the Curate's house.

That point was settled then—it must be Colonel Talbot.

Immediately after the ceremony, the bride and bridegroom were to set off on a six weeks' tour to the continent, taking Emma with them, after which they were to return and live in the agreeable retirement which the General's handsome house and demesne offered.

A couple of months in London every season, he thought advisable for two or three years, in order to give Emma and Lucy the benefit of the best masters. Harry he intended to send to Addiscombe as soon as he was old enough, and, if he was fitted for it, to get him a writership in India.

It was a few days before the wedding was to take place, that the General came to the cottage earlier than usual.

He had a plan in his head. He was

about to give a *fête* on the following afternoon, not only to the peasantry on his own estate, but to all the respectable young lads and lasses of the village, and he wanted the party, chaperoned by Mrs. Everard, (such was the name Julia had assumed) to spend the day at his house, and enjoy the sight of the gaiety and sports of the country folk.

Julia, although taking a lively interest in all that concerned her dear Grace, would willingly have been spared the exertion of accompanying the young Nevilles — her spirits were not attuned to scenes of rustic mirth, and her languid frame refused to submit to any unusual fatigue. But as Grace was not married yet, and the General was particular in every thing that related to appearances on his young friend's account, she found it impossible to refuse.

Various were the rural games which took place in the course of the afternoon, among the Welsh peasantry.

Two of the best harpers in that part of the country were engaged, to add the charm of music to the feast, which the General had ordered to be laid out in tents raised upon the lawn.

The Welsh girls footed it featly enough in the dance, although their partners cut rather an awkward appearance, dancing not being particularly suited to the genius of Welshmen, who would have been much more at home at their game of Chwarau ffoun ddwybig — playing with the two end staff or spear.

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The honest mirth of the peasantry—the placid enjoyment of Grace, who looked on and saw with unfeigned satisfaction how the General was idolized by the country people, as, with good Mr. Griffith, he walked from one tent to another, lingering particularly at

that which was appropriated to the children she had been used to teach—the exhilaration of Emma, Lucy, and Harry, who, with the Curate's two pupils, formed a group, and mingled in the throng, raised Julia's spirits from their usual melancholy tone, if not to joy, at least to a calmness unusual to her, which was kept up by the warbling of the songsters from a little grove, near the shade of which she had seated herself, and by the scent of those thousand balmy odours that float in the open air on a summer's afternoon.

Thus she sat, in a sort of pleasing, dreamy musing, whilst her friends scattered themselves about in various directions.

The intimate acquaintance of Mr. Griffith with all his poor parishioners, enabled him to satisfy the inquiries of the General respecting the ones who came from a distance; and as many of those a little way in the

hills could not speak a word of English, he served as an interpreter between them and their kind host.

Mr. Griffith had made himself so completely master of the Welsh tongue, as to be able to write it with ease and perspicuity, as well as to converse fluently in it ; and for the edification of those who, if at all, but very imperfectly understood English, the afternoon service in his church was always performed in the mother tongue, with a plain short sermon in the same language, suited to the comprehension of the class of peasantry who filled its venerable walls at those hours ; and this was, perhaps, a very principal reason that there were so few dissenters among his parishioners.

He had been in the habit, since he entered the parish, of visiting the poorest of the peasantry, and making himself looked upon in the light of a friend as well as a pastor by them.

Frequently, at that hour, in a summer's evening, when the labourer's work is over—when his ruddy, half-clothed children are on the watch for him, standing tiptoe on the hill side, and the wife peeps out from the low-roofed door, having just finished preparing the supper—the aged Curate might be seen slowly wending his way up one of those narrow paths that wound through the hills, to visit some poor man's dwelling.

Sometimes it might be a cheerful white-washed little cot, nestling under a green bank, half way up the hill, that he entered ; or, in the more remote and wilder parts of his parish, it might be a simple hut excavated in the slate rock, part of it formed by walls of mud mixed with rushes.

But no matter how rude the dwelling was that Mr. Griffiths visited, scarcely one was without a Welsh Bible, and this—after the salutations and inquiries on his side, and

the frank, cheerful replies on the other, and the pressing on him the oaten cake by the peasant's wife, habited in her homely striped jacket and woollen petticoat, with the rosy children lisping their greetings in their native tongue, and looking for a pat on the head and a kind word—he would invariably take up, and reading a few verses, would fix their attention by his clear and apposite exposition.

It was by thus associating himself intimately with his parishioners, that they preferred their own Curate and their church, to the dissenting preachers and meeting-houses that, in other districts, drew such crowds.

There was not one of his flock with whose history he was not acquainted, and to whose wants, spiritual and temporal, he had not endeavoured to minister; and if in the latter case his ability fell far short of his

wishes, still he was enabled to spread a little over a larger space with more advantage, than another with more means, but less conversant with their habits and necessities could have done.

Thus there was scarcely one of his guests concerning whom he was not able to inform the General.

“And who is yon pretty girl?” inquired the General, “who seems to keep aloof from the rest, and does not look as if she took an interest in any of the sports? there—that one sitting beside the elderly woman on the corner of the bench.”

“She is the daughter of a small farmer who lives near the common,” replied the Curate; “the poor thing is very dejected of late, as her parents want her to marry yonder grey-headed farmer, and she has set her heart upon a young blacksmith, the son of a neighbour. He, however, has

nothing but his trade, and is only just out of his time, and her parents do not think him a match sufficient for her. She has consented to give him up, according to their wishes, but steadily refuses the husband they have fixed upon for her."

"Is he a respectable young man?" inquired the General.

"Very much so," returned the Curate, "and I have no doubt the parents might be brought round, could they see him established in a good business."

"We will see what can be done on that head," said the General; "the blacksmith I employ is about to emigrate with his family to America, and if this young man is clever at his trade, and understands shoeing horses well, he might take his place—he should have all my custom, and I would recommend him to my friends."

"That would just answer," replied the

good Curate. "I know Morgan to be sober and industrious, and his late master told me that a cleverer blacksmith could not be found any where. The girl's father is not rich, and I doubt if he could give her any portion, but if the young people had a *bidding* to help them to begin house-keeping, they might do very well."

"They still keep up the biddings then," said the General—"I remember going to a wedding of that sort, out of curiosity, when I was quite a boy."

"Yes," replied the Curate, "they keep them up still, in this retired part of the country; it is a good old custom, a relic of ancient simplicity, and very much assists in setting up many a poor, honest couple. That young peasant woman yonder, and that stout, athletic-looking young man she is walking with—a carrier by trade—were married last week, and sent out the bidding

invitation to all their friends. It was cheerfully complied with, and every guest gave something to help furnish the cottage ; they, in their turn, when bid, will be able to assist some bride and bridegroom hereafter ; nor is it very expensive, a trifle being all that is expected. But perhaps you would like to see their bidding invitation—I think I have got a copy of it in my pocket.”

“ Very much,” replied the General ; “ though I always knew of the custom, it so happens that I never saw any of the notes of invitation.”

The Curate searched in one pocket, then in another—it was not there. Then he took out his pocket-book, where, after some rummaging, he found it put away with some parish documents.

On opening it, the General perceived it was neatly printed in Welsh ; but as he had quite forgotten what he might have known

of that language when a boy, they turned aside out of the beaten path, and seating themselves on the trunk of a felled tree, the Curate translated it literally as follows.

“As we intend to enter the matrimonial state on Tuesday, the 28th day of instant, we purpose to make a Bidding on the occasion the same day, at our dwelling-house, situate in St. Mary’s Street; when and where the favour of your agreeable company is most humbly solicited, and whatever donation you may be pleased to bestow on us then, will be thankfully received, warmly acknowledged, and cheerfully repaid, whenever called for on a like occasion,

by your obedient humble servants,

THOMAS MORRIS.

ANN JONES.

“P.S. The young man’s father and mother desire that all gifts of the above nature due to them, be returned on the said day, and will be thankful for all favours granted.—Also, the young woman’s mother desires that all gifts of the said nature due to her, be returned on the said day, and will be thankful for all favours conferred on her.”

“Excellent!” exclaimed the General; “I

think this usage is calculated to do service in many ways, as well as that of assisting a young couple—it must greatly contribute to draw closer the bonds of neighbourly kindness and good-will. I love the simplicity that still reigns in this portion of Great Britain, and my beloved Grace will unite with me, in endeavouring to keep it up among our tenantry, by encouraging their harmless pastimes, their national dress, and their fine old music. They are a hospitable and kind-hearted race, those Welsh peasants, and I hope to spend my life amongst them.”

“I agree with you entirely, in your opinion of them,” said the Curate.

“There are certainly some superstitious observances we would like to discourage,” continued the General; “for Grace and I have talked the matter over. I do not know if there are any among your parishioners,

who still repair on the eve of All Souls' Day, just before midnight, to the parish church, to hear the names whispered of those who are to die in the ensuing year. I remember, in my youth, hearing many stories of those who used to go there, and of the funeral processions which they fancied they beheld."

"I have done every thing I could," replied the good Curate, gravely, "to discountenance this remain of popish practice, but it still lingers among them, as do many superstitions long banished from other parts of the country. It is, however, principally in the remote corner of my parish, where a peaty, phosphorescent quality of soil prevails, and produces luminous appearances in the dark nights, that the funeral processions, corpse candles, and meteoric prognostics are still made a matter of undoubted faith."

Thus conversed the General and the Curate—the former, in the fullness of his heart, unfolding all his plans for the improvement of his tenantry; the care that Grace and he proposed to give to the education of the cottier's children—the school-house that was to be erected on his own grounds—the consultation he already had with Grace, as to who was to be the schoolmistress, and her wish to refer it entirely to the Curate, who would be enabled, from his knowledge of the dames in the parish, to select the one most competent to fill the situation.

Meantime young Talbot and Lucy, tired of walking about, took their seat on the green turf behind Julia, who could not help overhearing their conversation.

“And you found out the cave at last, which you had been looking for so long?” said Lucy, in an inquiring tone.

“Yes, Lucy,” replied Talbot, “I found

it, after a tedious search. It was very odd, was it not, that none of the country people should know of its situation?"

"Yes, very odd indeed!" returned Lucy; "but how did you come to hear of it at first?"

"I read an account of it," he replied, "in a very old history of the county, which I found, covered with dust, in an upper shelf of my uncle's library.—You know I like reading every thing that is odd and old."

"I know you do," said Lucy, laughing; "and I dare say that is what makes you such an oddity."

"Perhaps so," said Talbot, smiling; "but I suspect you would have liked a good climb yourself, Lucy, up and down the steps of the old castles in the neighbourhood, which, after reading their history, I went to visit. Now a peep into a lady's bower,

then a scramble on the top of the battlements, or a seat near one of the loop-holes, with a view over field and flood."

"Ah," said Lucy, "I should have liked it so much!—and this castle of Abertivie,—was it then so celebrated?"

"Yes," returned Talbot, "it was the scene of many splendid festivals and tournaments, given by the Princes of Powis.—But I will read you all about it."

"What! you wrote all those verses yourself, did you?" said she, as her companion pulled a sheet of paper out of his pocket.

"Yes, Lucy," said he, "and if you wish, you shall hear them."

"Yes, certainly," she replied; and he read——

But we spare our readers his school-boy composition, as we strongly suspect they would skip every word of it. Suffice it to

say, that if Talbot wrote not with the pathos of him who sung to his mistress of

“The Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And how for ten long years he woo’d
The Ladie of the land :”——

he read it to an ear that took pleasure in his “rude song.”

“Confess,” whispered Lucy, archly, “that you wrote that ballad because you know I am so fond of stories.”

“Yes, Lucy,” returned he, “when I saw you devouring ‘Percy’s Reliques’ the other day, I thought I would write something to please you.”

There was a tone of earnestness in Talbot’s voice as he said this, which brought the blood to Lucy’s cheek. She continued :

“Yes, I am fond of stories of all kinds, and do te upon the old fairy tale books. I wish I had a fairy god-mother, like Cinderella.”

“What!” exclaimed Talbot, “that you might have a grand court-dress, and go to the balls, and dance with some Prince?”

“No,” returned Lucy, “I would coax her to give me a pair of wings, and then I would fly away, and get into the old castles you have been writing about. I have no taste for balls, or crowded, hot rooms; I would much rather dance on the green sward. I am like a butterfly, and would live in the open air all day—the summer air, the green bank, and the birds singing overhead for me.”

And thus they chattered.

Julia listened, with a mixture of pleasure and pain, to the conversation of those young spirits, one of them scarcely emerged from childhood. She perceived the dawning preference of Talbot; and amidst the playful coquettishness of Lucy, descried the triumph of the young heart, that for the first time

has an inkling of its power. Those two young people must be lovers bye-and-bye, she thought, were Talbot to remain in this country ; but he is destined for India, and he will forget Lucy, although perhaps Lucy may think of him—such impressions are more easily effaced from the minds of men than of women.

Then she heard Lucy's exhilarating laugh, as she denied Talbot the nosegay she had plucked from the hedge, and his complaints of the rose-thorns, with which she tore his fingers, when he tried to get it from her.

Again the youth's voice was heard in a lower pitch, as, under Lucy's tuition, he went over the well-known charm on the holly leaf,—“she loves me, she loves me not,” &c. &c.

Julia could not but smile at the pertinacity and self-congratulation with which Lucy played upon the grave youth, or the skill

with which she elicited from him the romantic thoughts hidden under his reserved and studious exterior ; — the thoughtless, joyous Lucy, seemed to be, in character, as directly opposite to him as the antipodes are to each other, yet it was principally in this opposition that her greatest attraction consisted.

There was, however, one point on which they were united, and that was the love of romance, whether to be found in fairy tale, ballad story, or in the “*Metamorphoses*” of Ovid.

And now, again, Talbot had fallen upon the ancient lore of the country, and described the festivals that had been held in many of its castles.

“What is all this about tournaments and the Princes of Powis?” inquired the General, who, with the good Curate, was standing by the side of Lucy and young Talbot, before the latter perceived them.

Talbot started, coloured, and replied :

“ I have been giving Miss Lucy Neville an account of some of the ruins about Cardigan, sir, where I have been staying for a short time with my uncle. There are many historical recollections connected with the castle of Abertivie, near which my uncle’s residence is situated.”

“ And that manuscript, which Miss Lucy is trying to put so carefully into her reticule, contains, I suppose, some of your poetical inspirations, Talbot,” said the General, smiling. “ Come, now ! tell us what is in it, Lucy ;” and he playfully endeavoured to take the paper from her.

“ It is only an imitation of the old ballad romance, which Mr. Talbot was shewing me,” replied Lucy, rather confusedly, and tightly closing the strings of her reticule.

“ The very thing to suit ‘ Of a noble race was Shenkwn,’ which yonder harper is so indefatigably playing,” returned the General.

“Talbot ! you must let us read it—come, my good fellow !—no shyness ; you know I have seen some of your attempts at versification, which your father shewed me. Your translation from Horace of the Ode to the fountain of Bandusia, though not equal to Wrangham’s, is by no means bad.”

The shy Talbot, however, was not to be prevailed on, and a glance from him made Lucy draw the strings of her reticule still more tightly over it.

“I would much rather the youth continued his translations from Horace,” remarked the Curate, as they walked away.

“And why not endeavour at composition, as well as translation ?” inquired the General.

“The imagination should be kept in check rather than encouraged,” replied the Curate, and he sighed.

“My dear friend,” said the General, after

a pause; "I would advise you to cultivate any taste the youth may have, for poetry, drawing, music, or for any other resource, mental or mechanical. The chess-men he turned the other day for Lucy, are neatly done, and I was glad to see he could employ a leisure hour in that way. His friends intend him for India, and he will find every independent mode of employing his time a treasure, if he is to spend, as I have done, half a life on detachment, surrounded by none but sepoys. Nothing but employment of some kind or other, can counteract the effects that enervating heat, lassitude, and deprivation of society, have upon the idle officer in India. If a man cannot always have books, he may have a pen, a pencil, a flute. Banished from one's country and friends—for what is life there at best but a banishment?—with spirits depressed from the diseases incident to the climate, which

dry up the springs of life, and wither up the freshness of youth, the unoccupied mind turns in despair from the prospect around, a prey to all the horrors of dyspepsia and hypochondriasm."

* * * *
* * * *

Thus passed the day until towards evening, the only cloud being a slight disappointment which the General felt at the non-appearance of a friend from Cheltenham, who had promised, if he could in any way manage to do so, to be with him on some part of that day.

However, as there was a doubt expressed in the letter of the possibility of his not arriving until the morrow, the General had not built upon it as much as he otherwise would, although now, as the evening was beginning to draw so nigh, he could not help giving an expecting look sometimes towards the long avenue, which wound up

through a thick screen of oak and elm trees to the hall door.

Knowing Julia's dislike of meeting strangers, he had but slightly alluded to his friend's intended visit, and had not even mentioned his name to Grace; but as he looked at his gentle betrothed, and at all the happy faces around him, he felt that no time could be so propitious as the present moment, for introducing his expected guest to the Neville family.

He had nearly given up all hopes of his appearance that evening, when a noise of horses' feet was heard approaching the hall door, which was on a different side of the house to that on which the drawing room windows opened, and hastening to the hall, he arrived just at the instant that a tall, handsome-looking man entered at the door.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Such an unlook’d for storm of ills falls on me,
It beats down all my strength.”

ADDISON.

“MY dear Carrington,” said the General, wringing his hand warmly, “how happy I am to see you. I wish you had come a little earlier in the evening—but our gay doings are not over yet. Come, make yourself a little smart, you look rather dusty after your long ride. Green will show you the way to your room; but make haste, I want to introduce you to my betrothed. You may recollect I told you at Cheltenham I

was about to be married. The death of the young lady's mother necessarily postponed it for several months, but you are now come just in time for my wedding, which will take place in three days. On our return from the continent, where we are going for a short trip, you must pay us a longer visit."

Happiness makes us garrulous. Frederick had never before heard the old General express himself with such vivacity, and he certainly looked ten years younger than when he had met him a few weeks ago at Cheltenham.

Much pleased at his kind friend's evident satisfaction, Frederick Carrington hurried away to make the desired alterations in his toilet.

All the time that he was changing his dress his thoughts were directed towards the General.

Notwithstanding the disparity of age,

which the latter had hinted at in Cheltenham, as existing between himself and his intended bride, Frederick was satisfied that no woman could be unhappy in a union with so excellent a man.

“With what cordiality,” he mentally exclaimed—“yes, more than that—with what brotherly affection did he speak of my poor father, when I last saw him. What a warm, benevolent heart beats beneath that plain exterior. Withered and parchment-looking as his face is, the fresh feelings of youth are rife in his breast. Tears start into his eyes when he talks of the companions of his boyhood. And the very moment almost that he landed from India, to make inquiries about my poor father! How joyful would have been their meeting, had he been alive! And when he heard of my existence, how indefatigable were his exertions in my be-

half! I owe all my good fortune, my profession, and position in life, entirely to him. His is the spirit of true benevolence. I trust no wordlly-minded woman is marrying him for his wealth. Indeed I think, from his account of her and her sisters, and the little brother, although he did not mention their names, that gratitude must bind her to him, and certainly a young and innocent heart may be happy with such a man. I really long to see her. How I shall hate her, if I find she has no affection for him!"

Having made himself presentable, after his long dusty ride, the young man descended to the drawing-room. The windows, opening in the centre, were thrown back, and discovered, by the bright moonlight, the tents scattered over the lawn where the peasants had been dancing.

The tones of the Welsh harp were still

heard, and the graceful figures of the Welsh girls, in their pretty jackets and black hats, might be seen, as gathering in groups they began to disperse, and trace their way towards their respective homes, which lay, some in the village, some in those beautiful valleys that, winding through a mountainous country apparently denuded of trees, are unperceived by the traveller until he comes suddenly upon them.

As he entered the room, which was partly in shade from the deepening twilight, this picture burst upon him through the open windows. For an instant the apartment appeared to him to be wholly unoccupied. He paused at the door, but there was a sound of voices, and on looking again, he perceived that the General was standing near one of the windows conversing with two ladies, and looking upon the green-sward without. Their attention appeared directed

to two young girls, who, with graceful movements of the head and arms, were keeping time, at a measured pace, to the rather plaintive music of a harp, played by an old man seated outside the window.

A little boy was lying on the ground near them, caressing a favourite dog belonging to the General—now he stroked his head—then he pinched his ears and tail.

The dog was not quite pleased with this last, and gave a discontented snarl.

“My dear Harry,” said a sweet female voice, which thrilled strangely on the young man’s ear, “you know Beppo does not like being teased, the General has told you so—I am sure he will bite you.”

The group were so engaged in the above-mentioned manner, that they did not perceive the young man’s entrance into the room, and he had reached the General’s elbow, when the latter, starting and turning round, recognized and addressed him.

“My dear fellow! I was afraid you would not make your appearance until the ladies had all run away. Mrs. Everard! Miss Neville! allow me to introduce to you the son of a dear companion of my boyish days. This is Mr. Carrington, the friend I have been expecting from Cheltenham.”

Little Harry started from his recumbent posture on the floor, and rushing to the stranger, caught him by the hand, and whispered, — “You are come to be the brideman with me.”

Miss Neville!

A thunderbolt had fallen upon Frederick Carrington’s head. He had involuntarily bowed—he had attempted to utter some words, he knew not what, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

The betrothed wife of his friend, his benefactor, was Grace Neville—the idol of his boyish fancy—the loadstone that had

so often inclined his thoughts towards England—the being whom he had, until lately, tried to consider the wife of Mr. Morley. Yes, until lately, for it was only within the last week that he had discovered she was still unmarried, or, at least, that she was not Mrs. Morley.

Grace had been standing with her arm entwined within Julia's when the General had directed her attention towards the supposed stranger, and Julia felt that she leaned heavily on her for an instant, and that her whole frame seemed to totter. But it was only for an instant. 'She had a moment's breathing time given her during Harry's animated whisper, and she held out her hand to Mr. Carrington with an exclamation of—

“Is it possible, Mr. Carrington, that we see you in this country again—that you are returned from India?”

“What, Grace! Mr. Carrington an old acquaintance of yours!” exclaimed the

General, with glad surprise. "This is a pleasure I did not anticipate, and adds much to the happiness I feel from my young friend's visit. Where did you and Frederick become acquainted?"

"Mr. Carrington's father resided close to Seapoint," replied Grace, more faintly, "and was an old friend of my father."

"How delightful," exclaimed the General, with increased warmth of manner, "to find that my beloved Grace and the son of my dear old playmate do not meet as strangers!"

Frederick had now in some degree recovered himself, and the dusky shadow into which he had managed to draw back out of the bright moonlight, prevented the General, who, besides, was not very clear-sighted, from perceiving the look of despair with which his eyes had rested for an instant upon Grace.

He was, therefore, able to go through all

the speeches which he was called upon to make, of the gratification he felt at this unexpected meeting, with tolerable composure, while Grace fixed her eyes upon the ground, and veiled with her long lashes the tear that would obtrude itself.

Tea and lights were now brought in, and Grace had to officiate at the tea-table. The General handed her thither,—something he whispered to her of happiness, when he should see her there every evening.

Mr. Carrington addressed himself with a forced vivacity to Julia; asked her in a breath how long it was since she had been in India, and when she was about to return—said that he had come home very ill, but was quite recovered, and had thoughts of starting back again by the first Overland.

Grace busied herself in the arranging of the tea cups. It was a relief to her—any thing to employ herself about. She had

only caught one glimpse of Frederick's face and figure, and she dared not look again. There was an expression in his countenance which she, who had once known every turn of that countenance, dared not seek to unravel. He was much thinner, much sallow, and more colourless, than when she had seen him last ; but there was nothing surprising in this—he had come from India on sick leave.

The Curate entered the room while Grace was thus wrestling with her feelings, and bidding her busy heart be silent. He had remained in the lawn until he saw the last of his happy parishioners disperse, and he now came in, accompanied by his two pupils, Talbot and Davis, whom, with one or two other young people, the General had deputed him to invite to tea.

Emma, Lucy, and Harry, as soon as the lights were brought, had assembled round

a table covered with books of engravings, paintings on rice paper and talc, magazines, &c., and were now joined by the new-comers, who began eagerly to examine the books and portfolios which the General had collected together for their entertainment.

An enigma, however, which they had been studying hard to make out, seemed to have more attractions for Lucy and young Talbot than any thing else. After the first ebullition of joy which burst from the latter, on so suddenly beholding the face, and shaking the hand of his quondam friend and tutor—seeing that he was engaged in conversation with Mrs. Everard, and unable to give his undivided attention to himself, he had turned to Lucy, always his chosen companion.

The General approached the table, and leaning on the back of young Talbot's chair, was much amused by their conversation.

Lucy was in close consultation with her companion. A book lay open before them, which he had taken out of his pocket.

"A creature whose hands and arms are wonderfully long," whispered Talbot. "What do you think that is, Lucy?"

"That must be father long-legs," replied Lucy.

"I never thought of old father long-legs," returned young Talbot, "but I will have a peep at Kirby's Entomology to-morrow."

"Ah! the band," said Lucy, "that is the most difficult, 'C sharp should be the leading note, the bass should be B flat;' must mean a whole band of musicians—must it not?"

"My band is very fine," whispered the youth, in a confidential tone; "Listen, Lucy—you shall hear it—I have taken it all from Kirby, on the noises of insects.

‘ To please the ear as well as eye, the harper Cicida
is come,
The Mosquito to be trumpeter, for the present leaves
his home ;
The Capricorn-Beetles as fiddlers good appear,
And Folgaria-Lanternaria on the cymbal you shall
hear,
While drummer is the great Cockroach. Thus while
the people chat,
The music may be heard from C sharp to B flat.’ ”

“ Admirable ! ” exclaimed his pretty companion, clapping her hands ; “ Drummer is the great Cock-roach !—I like your drummer amazingly.”

“ You shall have the watch, Lucy, if I win it,” said Talbot, softly.

“ Oh ! no, thank you,” said Lucy, blushing, “ what would Grace say to me ! ”

“ You will certainly be appointed naturalist to the Entomological Society, by and bye,” said the General, laughing ; “ and sent out to Australia, to make discoveries and new additions to that science. Miss Lucy can accompany you—her assistance will be in-

valuable, in weaving nets for catching the moths and butterflies."

Pretty Lucy turned a deaf ear to the last insinuation.

"But do you think you are right about the goat-beetle?" continued the General, tapping the confused youth upon the shoulder—for a quiz about Miss Lucy Neville was rather sensitive ground, and he was not aware that the General was so near, "What say you to the goat-moth instead of the beetle?"

"A goat, whose coat is dusky brown, whose head is very strong," replied Lucy. "I think the beetle must have the strongest head of the two," continued she.

"You must settle it between you," said the General, smiling; and leaving them to their pastime, he turned towards the tea-table, and pausing near it, looked at Grace with the most pleasurable and complacent feelings.

She was at the moment employed in filling

out the tea, and giving it to the attendant, who stood near her with a waiter.

There is something in the occupation of the tea-table which is at once feminine and domestic, and Grace looked so beautiful—her eye bent downward—her white hands busy with the tea-cups—one dark curl resting on her neck—her cheek slightly flushed, and an almost imperceptible tremor in her fingers.

The General thought he should like to have her picture taken just then—her figure in that graceful position, and with that heightened colour in her cheek. And visions swam before his eyes of long winter evenings, with the curtains drawn close, and the bubbling, hissing urn on the table, and the sofa wheeled round, and the fire burning bright, and Grace there as now.

Julia and Mr. Carrington were sitting somewhat apart from the rest. The former seemed to have shaken off her accustomed

languor, while conversing with the newly-arrived guest. Interest, curiosity, a lively anxiety for her friend were aroused. She had felt the heavy pressure of Grace's arm, had helped to support her, and to cover a distress which was perceptible to her alone. But from whence did this distress proceed?—What did it mean? Were the vague suspicions that had at one time floated in her own mind, about to be realized? Was Grace Neville going to give her hand to the General, while her heart—which she knew Grace would try to make accompany that hand—rebelliously asserted its former inclinations? How sad, if such were the case! Yet if it were not so—if this Carrington was not the chosen, she secretly sighed for—why, when so early and so well acquainted with him, why never mention his name to her, for whom she had always shown such friendship? There must be a secret reason for this silence. Besides, it

was not a little thing that could thus move the gentle, quiet spirit of Grace.

That Mr. Carrington had felt a similar emotion—the start of surprise—the tone of the voice—the hurried way in which, when introduced to herself, he had returned her salutation—all told Julia that a sympathetic chord had been struck in his heart too. And now, where was the interchange of congratulations—of inquiries between him and Grace, which might have been expected from early companions meeting so unexpectedly? Would he not naturally have hastened to her side? Must he not have a thousand interesting matters to talk over with her?

Nothing of this kind had taken place; he was rattling away to herself, a perfect stranger, and hardly seeming to know what he said.

CHAPTER IX.

“ When we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen, in either of our brows,
That we one jot of former love retain !”

DRAYTON.

TEA was over, and Julia rose to depart. The bonnets and shawls were brought, and they were all soon equipped for a delicious walk by moonlight through the perfumed lanes and fields which lay between the General's house and the village.

The General, notwithstanding his long residence in India, had learned to accommodate himself to an English climate, and wrapping himself up in a furred mantle,

drew Julia's hand within his arm, saying at the same time—

“Carrington, give your arm to Miss Neville — you must have a thousand questions to ask her about your old friends at Seapoint. Mr. Davis, you will take care of Miss Emma — (Emmy hated boys, and before he had finished had fastened herself upon the General's other arm). Miss Lucy, I see, can take care of herself;” and the General nodded smilingly at his pretty tormentor, who was chatting away to young Talbot.

The others followed in a group with the good Curate.

Grace felt that Frederick's arm trembled like an aspen leaf, as, in obedience to the General, he offered it to her; and though she scarcely touched it with the tips of her fingers, it communicated a similar vibration to them.

Terrified at the situation she found herself so suddenly placed in—at the thousand reminiscences that rushed upon her mind—at the torrent of smothered feelings and young affections that were bursting upon her—upon her, the betrothed wife of a good and excellent man,—Grace summoned up all her energy, and endeavoured to break the dangerous silence, in which, at a few paces' distant, they were following the General.

She said something — she hardly knew what it was, about Indian heats, and the evening chill of an English climate.

He started, and replied hurriedly—

“ You spoke, Miss Neville — I beg your pardon—yes, it is cold, very cold indeed—quite an ice-bolt to the heart.”

And then he attempted to laugh. But in his voice there was a tone so unlike that of the Frederick Carrington of former days, that Grace almost shuddered.

“What, Carrington ! you talk of the cold,” said the General, turning his head. “An old Indian as I am might be allowed to talk of it, but you have been absent from England only five years.”

“And the air is so delicious !” observed Julia, “quite balmy.”

“Those five years have done the work of a century on me,” replied Frederick, “otherwise, indeed, I should not have got my sick certificate ; and after all, I think I had better have remained in India.”

“No, my dear young friend,” said the General, “you are wrong, believe me. There is nothing freshens up the heart so much as visiting one’s native land. You are wonderfully improved too in health already, although you are only returned a few weeks. A visit to Seapoint, whither you tell me you are going, will do you good ; there must be many friends there, no doubt, who will be rejoiced to see you. But you cannot leave

us until after next Thursday, and then you must promise to return to us as soon as we are settled at home, must he not, Grace?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Grace inarticulately.

"It is a great doubt to me if I shall not be on the wide ocean then," said Frederick, "if indeed I do not start sooner, and go by the next Overland."

"How you do talk, my dear friend!" exclaimed the General, with some impatience. "What! leave our beautiful England—give up your furlough before your health is half re-established! Why there must be some wonderful attraction in the East.—Some beautiful princess, whom you have converted, waits to bestow her jewelled hand upon you—or you must have good expectations of being made a bishop."

"Nothing of the sort, my dear sir, I assure you," replied Frederick, endeavouring to assume a disengaged manner; "but the

voyage home having done me so much service, I think another one back would be more apt to strengthen my health, than wasting my time thus in England;—besides, I have got quite a passion for the ocean, and were I not in the church, it is probable I should spend my life upon it.”

“Ah! your love for the sea is hereditary, Frederick,” replied the General, kindly; “your great-grandfather was an Admiral. I remember your poor father used often to speak of him; but I never knew of your fancy for the sea before—you ought to have had a chaplaincy in the navy, instead of going out to India.”

“We seldom know what is best for us,” observed Frederick, in an altered tone, “and our fortunes often turn upon a single straw cast into the balance. But I do not repent going out to India, and, under the blessing of God, I think I have been able to be of some use there. The schools have prospered

in my district, and many natives have been won over to the faith."

"Nothing," said the Curate, who now joined their party, "can be more gratifying to the heart than such success. What a vineyard for the labourer to work in, is spread out before him in that heathen land!"

The conversation now became general, and the silence of Grace was unmarked by any one, save by Frederick himself.

He recollected their young days—he recollected the time he was used to bring her Mrs. Sherwood's works to read, and the thousand questions she asked him,—when, a smiling, happy little girl, she read to him "Henry and his Bearer."

His dear playmate and companion!—she alone was silent and apparently uninterested, while strangers questioned him of the various places he had to visit, and of the schools which he superintended. The General hearkened to the Curate and Julia's

inquiries and to Carrington's replies ; and almost ceased to wonder, while he listened, that Frederick wished to hasten back again to such a scene of usefulness.

Grace, silent and apparently uninterested !

No—not uninterested. She saw in him the Frederick she had known long ago— anxious to improve every opportunity of doing good, and heedless of trouble or personal discomfort.

Again resounded in her ear the words he had once uttered :—“ Miss Neville—Grace !
Is your heart engaged ? O tell me !”

Again rose before her unwilling eyes the picture of herself, watching at the window of her father's drawing-room, and hearkening to every footstep. Then she remembered her bitter disappointment—her secret tears.

Burning blushes covered her forehead, as these thoughts came thick upon her. Perhaps it was foolish, but it was no crime then to think of him—but now ?

Now she no longer belonged to herself—bound by promise, by gratitude, to another—a few days more, and she would bear his name.

She heard the General's benevolent voice, addressing her sister Emmy. There was a sweet suavity in it that recalled her to herself ; her step became firmer, her hand ceased to tremble.

A turn in the road had divided the party a little. Grace felt the silence begin to be oppressive, and again she spoke.

“ A great many changes have taken place in the circle of your acquaintances at Seapoint, Mr. Carrington, since you went to India,” said she. “ You must have been surprised this evening to find the few remaining of our family settled in this retired spot.”

“ Yes, Miss Neville,” replied he, with some emotion, “ I was indeed surprised. I was not at all prepared for it, and deeply

regret the circumstances which brought about such sad events in your family. But," he added, after a short pause, in a hurried manner, "there was a change about to take place when I left Seapoint, which has not occurred."

"I do not know what it was," said Grace calmly, for she knew not to what he alluded; "what change can you be thinking of?"

"Perhaps I ought not to mention it now—just at this time too," replied he; "but since you wish it.... You will think me very impertinent, though; I had better not ask the question."

"I have not the slightest idea what you can mean, Mr. Carrington," said Grace. "Pray tell me what it is?"

"You do not choose to understand me, Miss Neville," returned he, impetuously; "and after all, why should I ask it? I would not venture to touch upon such a

subject, had it not been so very public, and so universally acknowledged, at the time I was leaving Seapoint.”

“You are quite enigmatical, Mr. Carrington,” replied Grace, and she began to feel as if she were getting upon dangerous ground, for she again recollected how enigmatical he had been once before.

“Dear Grace,” said the General, just at this instant, “I hope you have wrapped yourself up well, for although the night is so lovely, Emmy’s veil is wet through with the dew, which is falling fast.”

“Thank you,” replied Grace, recalling at once her wandering thoughts—touched by his attention, and the tone of interest in which he spoke. “Thank you, I have fastened my shawl quite close, and I like the dew, it is so deliciously refreshing.”

They were now close to the cottage. They made their adieus. Frederick scarcely

dared to touch the hand which Grace held out to him.

“It is so fine, Mr. Griffith,” said the General, with much animation, “that we will accompany you a little further in the lane—we are not arrived at the turn which leads to your cottage yet. You see, Frederick, how we can enjoy our beautiful summer nights in England. Ah! there is nothing like a European twilight in India.”

“Granted,” replied Frederick, with a sigh; “yet there is something excessively chilling in this atmosphere.”

They walked on in silence, each, probably, taken up with his own meditations, until they came opposite to Mr. Griffith’s humble abode. His two pupils had preceded him, and were standing in the flower-garden enjoying the moonlight.

“Good night, General—good night, Mr. Carrington, it is too late to ask you in,” said

the Curate ; and as he shook hands with the latter, he exclaimed :—

“ Cold ! can you complain of cold, Mr. Carrington ?— why, your hand is burning hot !”

“ I see how it is, Carrington,” said the General, in an anxious tone, as they turned to go home, “ notwithstanding the Cheltenham doctors talked to you of your liver, it is intermittent ague that is hanging about you.”

And now, while the General is making minute inquiries respecting the state of his young friend’s health, and warmly descanting upon the benefit to be derived from the salubrity of the Welsh air, we must look back a little, and see what has been the career of Frederick Carrington since we parted from him in the early part of these volumes.

We do not mean to follow the uneventful life of a clergyman in India, whose only adventures have been occasioned by the long

journeyings he has had to undertake, and his endeavours—too frequently unsuccessful, to make converts of his heathen brethren.

After carrying the reader back to the period of his embarkation for India, a few words will suffice therefore to elucidate the story.

* * * *

Frederick Carrington had left England with a heart torn by disappointment.

Until he had lost every hope of obtaining Grace's hand, he was not aware himself of the full extent of his love, or how thoughts of her had wound themselves round every fibre of his heart.

He had often repeated to himself, while engaged in the toilsome routine of school duties, that Grace Neville never could be his. But as long as Grace was disengaged—not often it is true, but still sometimes seen looking gentle, beautiful, and kind—

he could not prevent a secret hope from lingering in his bosom, faint, indeed, as a solitary star glimmering in a dark night.

Faint it was, but still it was there ; and when the prospect of independence burst upon him from so unexpected a source, thoughts of their playmate days, and young companionship—with the soft smile of riper years—rose before him, and his beating heart told him there was yet a chance—Grace might still be won.

We have seen how misconstruction and false reports blasted his rising hopes, for

“ Whisping tongues can poison truth ;”

and how he left England with the full conviction that Grace’s affections were given to another, and that she was about to be married.

This, while it overwhelmed him for a time, entirely put an end to his agitating suspense. Except as an early friend, Grace could no longer be any thing to him—his

buried hopes could never again be resuscitated.

Frederick had, however, too much energy and decision of character to permit his thoughts to linger in fruitless regrets on the past.

A vast field of labour and usefulness was open before him. He had entered upon a profession for which he was peculiarly adapted, and he turned all the powers of a strong mind upon the great duty of fulfilling it well.

A voyage of five months found him not unoccupied. The duty of chaplain to the vessel had devolved upon him, and as he had furnished himself with a good supply of books, the study of ecclesiastical matters, the writing of sermons, and the endeavour to master Hindostanee — a language so necessary for his labour among the natives — left him no time for vain regrets, in which, indeed, he was not of a temper to indulge.

The climate of India agreed with him, and dissipated all the pulmonary symptoms which had alarmed the doctors, and it is likely that no necessity would have existed, on the score of health, for his return to Europe, had he remained fixed in the neighbourhood of Bangalore, whither he was first sent.

A young clergyman, however, who had gone out to India in the same vessel with him, was taken ill in the remote part of the Presidency to which he had been sent on his first arrival in the country.

His illness, though very depressing, being principally upon his spirits, was not of that nature to induce a medical board to give him a sick certificate, and he was obliged to wrestle with an ailment that was daily gaining ground, without any hope of being able to change the scene.

Frederick accidentally heard of his situation from a friend to whom the young man

had written, and who, when he mentioned the subject, gave it as his conviction, that a change for a time to the more equable climate of Bangalore, would restore his poor correspondent to health ; and upon hearing this, Carrington immediately volunteered an exchange of duty for six months, although he was fully aware that the district to which this exchange would lead him was not considered a healthy one.

It was in a particularly sultry season that Frederick went thither. He found there was an immensity of labour, and great scope for improvement in the tract he was to have for a time under his spiritual care ; as, owing to his failing health and spirits, the poor invalid had latterly been totally unable to get through.

Frederick, careless of his own comfort and convenience, when his Master's work was to be done, exerted himself in a manner

that would have affected a much stronger constitution than he possessed.

The consequence was a violent illness, which attacked him just before the expiration of the six months.

When he felt it coming on, he had hoped that the change of air, which was at hand, would have put all to rights, but there was no escape for him, and the clergyman with whom he had so kindly exchanged duty, arrived only in time to attend him on his bed of sickness.

Youth, and the skill of his medical attendant, triumphed over the malady ; but it left him in such a state of exhaustion, that the physicians found it necessary at once to order him to Europe.

A circumstance had occurred a few months after Frederick's arrival in India, which had put Grace Neville's marriage beyond a doubt—if, indeed, any such doubt

—which, however, was not the case—had remained in his mind.

Happening to pay a visit to a young officer, with whom he had a casual acquaintance, he found him engaged in perusing a letter just received from England.

The young man was running over it in that eager, joyous manner in which a good gossiping letter from some friend in the dear mother-land is always perused, and making Mr. Carrington sit down, began immediately to read part of it aloud.

He was so engaged in it, that he took no notice of the start and change of colour, with which Frederick heard part of the news it contained.

The epistle was from Mr. Stanhope, the young man being his nephew. He did not write very often; but when he did, his letters were doubly acceptable, as he managed to cram them with all sorts of news, and never sent them without something else very

seasonable to a young ensign, videlicet, money.

There was county news—news of fishing and hunting—mention of births, deaths, and marriages ; but what fixed Carrington's attention, was, “how his college chum, Everard Morley, notwithstanding all his old bachelor habits, had just taken the wise step of marrying a pretty girl of seventeen or eighteen ;” the name was not mentioned, but the age was Grace's—there was no question who this pretty girl was. .

Frederick heard no more news through that channel, as the regiment to which the young ensign belonged was ordered to a distant part of India.

Notwithstanding the beneficial effects usually derived from a sea voyage, Frederick found himself still languid and debilitated when he arrived in England.

By the advice of one of the first physicians in London, whom he consulted on

landing, he went immediately to Cheltenham, where, in a few weeks, he began to feel the blessing of returning health.

Meantime he had made acquaintance with a gentleman at a boarding house, in which he had taken up his residence for the present, whose information gave a new spring to his thoughts, and awakened a new object for his inquiries.

Captain Selwyn was one of those good-tempered, single individuals, who, buffeted about for more than half a century, exposed to all the hardships and dangers that attend a sailor's life, may frequently be seen enjoying themselves in their latter days, sometimes at the club in London among naval and military men of their own standing, at other times seeking, now one, now another bathing or watering place, as convenience or inclination prompted, and making their home at a boarding-house or hotel.

In this manner Captain Selwyn had, at

one time or another, visited most of the fashionable places of resort in England. The last summer he had spent at Seapoint, and on making Mr. Carrington's acquaintance, had strongly advised him to go thither for the benefit of sea-bathing.

"It was a pleasant, sociable, sea-side place," he said, "where he had passed a very agreeable three months, having had an introduction from a friend, which procured him invitations to all the private parties, and admission to any gaiety that was going on."

On finding out that his new acquaintance had been so lately at Seapoint, Frederick was eager in his inquiries about a spot endeared to him by many reminiscences; for if the latter part of his abode there had been marked by disappointment, still there were early years of enjoyment, and home memories to be dwelt upon.

His questions were numerous concerning the residents, and yet somehow or other he could not at first bring himself to name the Nevilles.

Captain Selwyn—who, of an open cheerful disposition, mingled with society whenever it came in his way—seemed to be acquainted with every individual.

He knew Doctor Davis and his good sister — described Miss Kitty Chatterton and Miss Ellersly to the life; and had even seen Adam Carter, the old gardener, at work in the small pleasure ground that surrounded the boarding house where he had been staying.

He had breathed the pure air of the common — said how the butcher who kept his sheep there, killed the best mutton in Seapoint; and even informed him, that Jane Pastry, the confectioner's daughter, was married, and gone to live in London.—

But no mention — not one word of the Nevilles.

At last, Carrington inquired if he had ever seen or heard of a Mr. Morley, who used frequently to be at Seapoint during the summer months.

No — there was no gentleman of that name staying at Seapoint while he was there — but, wait a moment—yes, he had certainly heard the name mentioned. He recollected that Miss Kitty Chatterton had told him, one evening when he happened to be seated near her at Doctor Davis's, of some very mysterious separation between a Mr. Morley and his wife. Yes, yes—he was certain the name was Morley. He used frequently to be on a visit, she said, at the house of a family of the name of Neville, who formerly resided at a pretty place called Woodside — he remembered the name particularly because he had been at a pic-nic party in the grounds of

Woodside, then unoccupied, and it was decidedly the prettiest residence about Seapoint.

Frederick was thunderstruck.

A separation!—it could never have been Grace's fault—was the thought that flashed across his mind.

He looked as if he would like to hear more, and although he had not spoken, Captain Selwyn continued.

He remembered Miss Kitty told him a great deal about it, and how it was in Ireland that Mr. Morley had made this match, which had turned out so unhappily.

“That cannot be,” said Frederick, trying to repress all outward signs of the concern with which he heard the relation. “Mr. Morley was on the point of being married to Miss Grace Neville when I sailed for India.”

“Very true,” returned Captain Selwyn,

who, as he went on, seemed to recollect the circumstances he had heard more minutely : “ I remember Miss Kitty said every body was so surprised when he returned from Ireland with his young bride—they had all set it down that he was to be married to Miss Neville—but it was no such thing—his wife was an Irish lady, and her father had a property in the county of Kerry.”

“ And the Nevilles ? did you hear any particulars relating to them ? ” inquired Frederick, endeavouring to appear calm and unconcerned.

“ Oh ! they had all left that part of the country,” said Captain Selwyn ; “ the father died bankrupt, somebody or other told me, the day of the pic-nic ; for as we sat under the shade of a bower in the garden, I began to make some inquiries about the original possessors of the place.”

Frederick remembered the bower well.

“ The present owner,” continued Captain

Selwyn, “is a London merchant, and only comes down occasionally.”

“Did you hear what had become of the family?” inquired Carrington.

“No, I asked some one, but they could not tell — they only knew that they had gone away very poor, to live in some cheap place.”

Carrington could elicit no more — but what had he not heard? what castles might he not build on such a foundation?

Grace! his once so dearly beloved Grace, still unmarried. And now the old visions rose again, and thick-coming fancies crowded upon him.

He was almost angry with himself for indulging in them.—What if there should be some mistake?—But no, it was impossible there could be any mistake in Captain Selwyn’s intelligence, gathered as it was upon the spot where the family had once been so well known.

His old friend Mr. Neville gone! died bankrupt! How was it that none of these particulars had ever reached him through the medium of the newspapers? Then he recollected, that, about the period in which it must have taken place, the Bishop of Calcutta had sent him on a mission, for some weeks, to a remote part of the Presidency, where no newspapers were to be seen.

Poor!—Captain Selwyn said he had heard they were very poor. Alas! what misfortunes might they not have had to buffet with since he had last seen them. But if Grace would consent to be his wife, and accompany him to India, *there* his income was very handsome; he had never spent the half of it on himself; he would be able to make her mother an allowance, and thus add something to her comforts.

He would go down as soon as possible to Seapoint, and make inquiries of Miss Davis,

the Doctor's sister—she, most likely, would be able to inform him where Mrs. Neville and her children resided.

Such were the reflections and determination of Frederick Carrington.

He would have set off for Seapoint the same day that he had had this information from Captain Selwyn, but General Craddock had made it a point that he should be with him at his residence in Wales on the following one, and he could not break faith with so kind a friend.

It could only make a delay of a day or two at most, and he would go from thence to Seapoint.

Light was his heart, high were his spirits when he took the road on the following morning for the General's residence.

Grace Neville was the only image present to his mind during the ride.

Sometimes, it is true, the thought flashed across his mind, that, though not married

to Mr. Morley, she might be now the wife of another — a year had elapsed since Captain Selwyn had heard news of her. But his heart refused to believe the supposition, and no foreboding prepared him for the discovery he was about to make.

CHAPTER X.

“ ——— the hand of fate
Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.”

ADDISON.

“MY dear General,” said Frederick, as he entered the breakfast room on the following morning, “I really believe you are right, and that I have got this confounded intermittent ague you talked of. I will retrace my steps to-day, if you will kindly excuse me, and take up my abode at Cheltenham for a little time longer. I am not at all feeling well.”

“Nonsense! nonsense! my dear fellow,” returned the General, quite excited, “it is

impossible; you must not go. You can nurse yourself here for a few days, just as well as if you were at Cheltenham. The doctors can do nothing in this complaint—air, exercise, and cheerful society—you must try these for a day or two, at least. Come, you shall pay a visit with me this morning to your old acquaintance, Miss Neville; I am rejoiced to find that you are not a stranger to her. You talked of going to Seapoint, too, from this—the change will do you good. Ah! you will re-visit it with far different sensations from what I felt, when I returned here.”

“Yes, I shall indeed!” replied Frederick, with a sigh.

“My existence was a perpetual blank at first,” continued the General. Many years of absence had snapt asunder every tie of early affection and friendship. But come, you must promise to remain at least for a day or two.”

“I—I fear,” said Frederick, hesitatingly.

“No—I will take no excuse,” resumed the General. “If you are not better by to-morrow, although it will be a disappointment, I will not insist upon your remaining for the wedding. My Grace, I know, will be disappointed at it too, as I told her last night that you were to be brideman.”

Carrington walked to the window—he knew not what to say.

“Breakfast is ready, I see—let us sit down,” observed the General, drawing his chair towards the breakfast-table. “Take your seat there, Carrington. What shall I help you to? Try a mutton chop—the Welsh mutton is capital—very different from what we get in India.”

Frederick declined—he would take a cup of coffee.

“What! no eggs—no mutton—no cold beef,” exclaimed the General. “Nothing but a cup of coffee! this will never do,

Carrington ;” and the General began to think that poor Carrington was really very ill.

“ You must go with me over my grounds by-and-bye—I long to shew them to you—and then to the Nevilles. Perhaps our mountain air may give you some appetite for luncheon,” continued the General, who could not make up his mind to part with his young friend so soon.

Carrington saw he could not get away—it was impossible—he must stay that day.

But to remain for the marriage—it would be torture. All his early predilections for Grace Neville had been revived since his arrival in England, upon discovering that she was not the wife of Mr. Morley ; and to find out her residence—to acknowledge his long-cherished affection—and to win her hand—had been his continued dream, day and night, for the last two days.

And now, how was he awakened from

this dream? Grace was about to become the wife of another, and that other his kind benefactor, to whom he owed every thing in the world.

No, he must not think of her now—there was crime in the thought.

Yet, did Grace ever like him? Did she ever think of him while he was absent? Was it possible that there could have been a mistake, and that she was not engaged to be married to Mr. Morley, when he sailed for India?—were questions that would intrude on him in spite of himself.

Why, if he was indifferent to her, had he felt the little hand tremble so violently, as it scarcely touched his arm? Why was she so embarrassed? Why had she met his eye, when she did meet it, at the tea-table, with a cheek now pale, now red? Once he had studied that dear face so well, that he knew every change and turn of it—he

could not be mistaken—Grace was internally agitated.

Yet, even if she did love him, what could it be now to him? Should he basely try to step between her and the kind friend she was about to be united to?

Never—he would despise himself as the meanest of wretches, if such an idea could enter into his head or heart.

Thus had he mused through a wakeful night, and by the morning he had come to the conclusion of leaving his friend's house immediately after breakfast;—but this resolution he found more easy to make than to execute.

The General was positive in keeping him, at least for the day; and Mr. Carrington saw that he must make up his mind to get through this period, short in reality, but immeasurably long to him, as well as he could.

“Some men might think me an old fool,” said the General, after a moment's pause,

“for marrying so young a wife; but Grace Neville is an apology for any man doing a foolish thing. Do you not think her a lovely girl?”

“Yes, Miss Neville is certainly a very pleasing looking girl,” replied Frederick, colouring and stammering.

“Only pleasing looking!” exclaimed the General, with apparent disappointment. “Beauty, however, is a matter of mere taste, but there is so much intellect in her countenance!—no one can look at that soft, hazel eye, without being convinced of her purity and goodness.”

“Yes, I am sure Grace Neville is all that is admirable and excellent,” replied Mr. Carrington, with an energy that made the General start, and lay down his knife and fork—but he looked pleased at the same time.

“Come, Carrington,” said he, “take another cup of coffee, since I see you are

determined to have nothing else, and tell me if you saw much of Miss Neville and her family before you went to India."

Frederick was now on his guard, and said, with as much carelessness as he could assume—

"Not latterly, for being usher at —— school, I had no leisure for keeping up old acquaintanceship ; but as a child, I knew her very well."

"Was she as pretty then as she is now?" inquired the General.

"Yes, indeed, I believe she was—but I hardly recollect ; I do not think I am much of a judge," replied Frederick, rising from the table and walking to the window.

"How dreadfully stupid of him," thought the General, "not to remember all about Grace."

"I see you have no mind for any more breakfast, Carrington," said the General, as soon as he had finished his repast ; "get

your hat therefore, and we will go over the grounds first, and then to the cottage. I will try and prevail on the young people there to come and dine with us. This will put you in spirits. Mrs. Everard, I am sure will *chaperon* them, if I make it a point with her, although I had some difficulty in getting her to come here yesterday."

Frederick took his hat in despair. He saw that another meeting with Grace was inevitable.

Grace had schooled herself well in the mean time. She was the betrothed of General Craddock—she must allow no thoughts, no reminiscence, no feeling, to enter into her mind unworthy of his wife. A few days more, and she should bear his name.

To the anxious looks of Julia, who with a woman's penetration guessed her secret, she made no reply. She saw what was right for her to do, and she determined to get through it. She recollected how this en-

gagement between her and the General had cheered the dying bed of her dear mother. She had never even then fancied that she could love him as she might have done one more suited to her in years ; but gratitude and respect were his due, and she was satisfied that she should be able to fulfil all the duties of a wife to so excellent a man.

CHAPTER XI.

“ I would give the hopes of years,
For those bygone hours.”

MRS. NORTON.

THEIR walk to the cottage, particularly during the first part of it, was rather a silent one.

General Craddock felt ill at ease about Frederick's health ; the latter looked pale and jaded, and so spiritless ! The General did not like this depression of spirits, it argued that the young man must be really unwell. It was evident that instead of improving, his health must have become worse since the General saw him at Cheltenham,

and he began to think that he would be the better for going abroad—to Germany or Switzerland for instance, where the baths were so celebrated; and after all, it was complete guess-work with the medical men—travelling and change of scene were often the best physicians.

“My dear Frederick,” said he, “if you do not find yourself better after the excursion that I have been advising you to make to Seapoint, and which you seem to have some idea of, I would recommend you to try the continent. A few weeks at Baden-Baden, or the hot baths of Leukerbad, might be of great service to you.”

“Thank you, my dear sir,” replied Frederick, “thank you for the kind interest you take in my health, but I really think the climate of Europe does not suit me now. I have a serious idea of returning to the Cape, and making out the rest of my leave of absence there.”

“My dear boy,” said the General with unusual energy, “this will never do, who ever heard of such a wild scheme! Just returned to England—to your native land, and to fly off again in such a manner!”

“England has very few attractions for me now;” replied Frederick, dejectedly, “in fact I feel as if my home was in the East. And there, you must allow, my dear sir,” continued he, endeavouring to speak cheerfully, “my sphere of usefulness lies.”

“Yes, yes,” said the General, “when your health is fully established, but it is no use going back sick—worse than when you came. Give English air a fair trial, or try some part of the continent—besides I dare say you would like to take a wife with you when you return, you clergymen—”

“Stop, dear sir,” exclaimed Frederick, with some agitation, “you are quite wrong; I assure you I have not the slightest idea of marrying.”

“ Well ! perhaps not exactly now ; ” returned the General, “ but I dare say you will think of it by and bye, my young friend, —I remember when I thought as little about it as you do, and yet now that I am on the point of being married myself, I am satisfied that an amiable helpmate must add considerably to the enjoyments, as well as soften the ills of life. I wish you could meet with such another as my Grace—perhaps at Seapoint.”

“ I doubt if there is a second Miss Neville in the world ; ” exclaimed Frederick, “ but if there were it would be the same to me—I shall never marry—never.”

“ Ah ! some disappointment in India ; ” thought the General, looking earnestly at him, “ I must say no more upon the subject—I conjectured as much.”

Thus, sometimes conversing, sometimes silent, they reached the cottage.

They found all the young people with

Julia, seated together on a bench beneath the large hawthorn bush, that grew on the edge of the green slope before the cottages, and part of which was prettily laid out in flower-beds.

Grace, who had scarcely raised her eyes to Carrington's face on the evening before, now perceived, at the first glance, that he was looking wretchedly ill.

And really it was no wonder that he should look ill, for he had not closed his eyes in sleep all the preceding night. He had spent it in a sort of feverish wakefulness, yet with all the fantasies and visions of an uneasy slumber visiting his pillow.

The form of Grace herself appeared to flit about him, in every imaginable variety of character.

Now she came—the lovely little girl, her Scripture lesson in her hand, with those soft dark, earnest eyes upturned to his, entreating him to examine her before she went to

church ; then, more bashful grown as years stole on, she took from him, with a blush and a smile, the pretty nosegay he had made up for her with old Adam Carter's assistance.—Childhood was gone, and in beautiful womanhood she rose, pale and tearful. She brought before him their early friendship, she reproached him with his broken vows—vows made to her in spirit if not in words—with his inexplicable behaviour at the last interview he had with her, just before he went to India—no further explanation asked, no doubts cleared up—taking from common report, the truth of an engagement for which there might have been no grounds.

It passed, and again she was there, but in different guise. She assured him of her indifference, she reproved him for his appearance at the moment when she was on the point of making a happy marriage with one of the most amiable and benevolent of men. Cold and haughty in her words and attitude,

she bade him depart, and not throw the cloud of his regrets over her nuptial day.

Thus had the night passed in fitful and uneasy visions, and when morning brought with it more collected ideas, the questions, had Grace ever loved him?—how was she affected towards him now?—in defiance of all his attempts to restrain them, would force themselves upon him, and memory immediately began to retrace every little incident of former days—the walks so often lingered on—the looks so kind and speaking—the implied knowledge of his love by Miss Kitty Chatterton, when she threatened to send him the green ribbons, and old Adam Carter's suggestions on the eve of his departure.

And now again, for the hundredth time, every word, every look of the preceding evening was weighed and commented on. But her eyes—her speaking eyes! he

had never been able to read them, for Grace had kept them continually averted.

And here, standing upon the green plot, with the General in the midst of Grace and her companions, all these thoughts simultaneously rushed upon him, whilst he endeavoured to seem disengaged, and to enter into conversation with the younger members of the party. But Lucy displayed her pinks and carnations to eyes that did not see them, and Harry talked of a ride he had had upon a stray donkey that morning, to ears that did not catch a syllable he said.

However, time flew on.

The ladies promised to dine at the General's, and to go early, and the latter took Carrington soon away, in order to search for the Curate, and prevail on him to join their dinner party.

“Would that the day were at an end,” Frederick thought, “and that the morrow were come!”

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The General was a little puzzled.

There was something he did not quite understand. He had been surprised and rejoiced on finding that his beloved Grace and Frederick Carrington were early acquaintances.

It was so pleasant for him to discover that in bringing the son of his early friend into his family circle at so interesting a moment as on the eve of his marriage, it was not a stranger he was introducing to his timid bride.

She had recognised him immediately as an early acquaintance. His father—the chosen companion of the General in happy school-boy days—had resided near her's for years.

The knowledge of this had increased tenfold his satisfaction at Carrington's visit. What by-gones would not the latter and Grace have to talk about! How often should he not hear the name of his lamented friend mentioned! How many past in-

cidents would they not have to comment upon!

But no — nothing of this sort had taken place. Silent and reserved in their demeanour, Grace and Frederick appeared to stand aloof from each other, and, instead of seeking, to fly from any opportunity of conversing together.

It was true, poor Carrington was certainly far from well. But his beautiful Grace! — beautiful, though so pale and statue-like. Ah! marriage must be always a serious change to a woman — new loves! new friendships! — perhaps it was natural she should be very grave, but he would have wished it had been otherwise.

Dinner was over — but how tremulous Frederick's hand was, when he helped Grace to wine! and how her colour came and went, when, in the disposition of the guests, he was accidentally placed beside her!

Julia could not help observing how

thoughtful the General looked when he took his seat at the head of the table, and what an anxious glance he now and then turned on Grace during the dinner.

Grace sat beside him, looking very pale certainly, but calm and composed. Julia saw, however, that she put great force upon herself in endeavouring to utter a few words, and that she sent away every thing she was helped to, almost untasted.

Indeed, were it not for Julia's exertions in engaging the Curate in conversation, and in making Emma and Lucy talk, the dinner would have gone off in almost perfect silence.

But it is over—the ladies are now in the drawing room, and Julia proposes a walk in the shrubbery.

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Grace is fatigued, she cannot walk—they have returned to the house, and Julia proposes to get a book out of the library and read to her.

CHAPTER XII.

“ Though hide it fain ye would,
 It plainly doth declare
 Who hath your heart in hold,
 And where good-will ye bear.”

SIR THOMAS WYATT.

“ MY dear Mrs. Everard, do not go away—I want to have a few moments’ conversation with you,” said the General, in a voice which he vainly attempted to steady. “ What is all this between those young people? Do you think that Grace and Carrington are attached?”

“ I do,” replied Julia, in a firm voice.

The old General’s stick trembled, on which he leaned for support.

“Grace has not used me well in this matter,” said he, with much agitation. “Ought she not to have told me candidly how she was situated with respect to Frederick Carrington?”

“My dear General,” returned Julia, soothingly, “Grace is incapable of deceit—she never meant to deceive you. I never heard her mention Mr. Carrington’s name during the whole course of our acquaintance, and it was with the greatest difficulty I extracted from her this day—and that only because she wished me to assist her in avoiding having any particular conversation with him—that there was a time when she thought Carrington loved her, and when she would not have refused to listen to his suit, for they had been playmates and friends from childhood, until the death of his father. Then all was changed between them. Mr. Carrington never told her in words that he loved her, not even on getting the ap-

pointment in India, and Grace learned to forget a man who, she began to think, could never have had any real preference for her. Old reminiscences and associations have been awakened by his sudden appearance, but Grace knows too well what is due to you, to have either interview or explanation with him."

"And has Mr. Carrington said nothing to you—told you nothing?" inquired the General.

"Only," returned Julia, "that, misled by some false reports, he left England with the impression that Miss Neville was about to be married to another."

"To whom?" inquired the General.

"To her relative, Mr. Morley, who was an occasional visitor at her father's house," replied Julia, with a faltering tone.

"And this had no foundation?" returned the General.

"Not the slightest," responded Julia.

The General was silent, and Julia continued—

“Mr. Carrington wishes to leave this to-morrow.”

“I know it,” said the General, in a depressed tone of voice. “I had a great deal of difficulty in persuading him to remain for to-day. How could I guess his reasons?”

“Impossible!” said Julia.

“Where is he at present?” inquired the General.

“On my way thither he galloped past me,” returned Julia, “saying he was going to take a short ride, and would be back to tea.”

“Right!” said the General, “nothing calms the nerves like exercise. I thank you, my dear Madam, for your information—you and the ladies, with our good friend Mr. Griffith, must amuse yourselves as well as you can until tea-time—I will join you then.”

Julia sought her friends with a beating heart, and opening a beautiful piano—a present to Grace, which had arrived the preceding day—with the assistance of the good Curate, who, passionately fond of music, and no mean performer himself, would hear of no excuse, succeeded in prevailing on Grace to play one of Handel's pieces.

Grace's fingers, tremulous and unsteady at first, soon recovered their wonted expression and brilliancy. Emma and Lucy's clear voices chimed in pleasingly—the Curate threw in a note here and there, and Julia perceived that in selecting a piece of sacred music, she had chosen that which was best fitted to soothe the mind of her poor friend.

The General walked for an hour in his favourite walk in the garden. Slowly and musingly he paced it, and then he returned to the drawing-room.

Grace made the tea, as on the preceding night, and she felt it a relief that Mr. Car-

rington did not make his appearance until it was half over. Although, perhaps, more grave than usual, she had nerved herself to be calm.

The General's manner was as kind as ever, although a nice observer would have said it was not quite so collected.

Tea was over. Mr. Carrington had talked the whole time to Lucy, drinking cup after cup like a man in a fever. He spoke truth when he told her he had an intense headache, and that he had been out for a while on horseback, in the vain hope to get rid of it—he said he must get back as fast as he could to his Cheltenham doctor, and should start in the morning at day-break.

Again Julia, seconded by the Curate, had recourse to music, and Grace was soon involved in the intricacies of another of Handel's fine pieces—but her finger had lost its brilliancy—her eye its power of sight, and a deadly paleness began to creep over her.

“Miss Neville is not well!” exclaimed the Curate, who had been guiding the voices of the younger girls.

“This way, dear Grace,” said Julia, “this way—five minutes upon the sofa here, and you will be quite well, the heat has overcome you,” and she led her into a small library, communicating with the drawing-room by folding doors. “The window is open here—you want air—the faintness will go off in a moment.”

“I am quite well now,” said Grace, endeavouring to rally. “I am so sorry I was obliged to stop in the middle of the piece; dear Julia, I will finish it now if you will allow me,” and she turned to go back.

“No, Grace; you must not play again—sit here for a few minutes in this cool room,” said the General, who had followed them; and as he spoke, with a nervous hand he made her sit down upon the sofa.

“You, dear Emmy, take your sister’s

place," he continued. "Mrs. Everard, help the young people to finish their music,"—and in a lower voice, "send Frederick Carrington to me."

Julia obeyed; and as Mr. Carrington, bewildered, and not knowing what the summons could mean, entered the library, she closed the folding-doors after him.

"Carrington," said the General abruptly, "you love Grace Neville." The young man started, and looked aghast—then he said, firmly,

"Yes, since I have been a boy, I have loved Grace Neville, but I have never told her so, and now"—and he said it proudly—"you cannot think, General Craddock, that I could have the ingratitude—that I should be the villain, to dare to breathe such a thought to the betrothed wife of my friend, my benefactor."

"No," said the General, much moved, "I do not accuse you of it, Carrington."

Then he turned to Grace, who, speechless, unable to move, and with a heart throbbing from such excess of emotion, that it seemed as if it would have burst its frail tenement, had sunk back upon the sofa, and taking her hand in his, he said,

“ My child, I knew not how it was with your heart until this evening. I know you are ready to fulfil your engagement to me ; and that you would endeavour to be the kind and attentive wife, cheering and brightening my latter days. But I am not so selfish, Grace, as to exact this sacrifice from you. No, Grace, I give you back your promise, and freely bestow this hand, which was pledged to me, upon him whom your young heart chose in your bright days of childish innocence. Take her, Frederick, and make her happy. You shall receive with her the dowry of a daughter, for as such I adopt her, and as such I shall always consider her.”

The General pressed his lips upon Grace's brow, and she felt a tear upon her forehead.

"My more than father!" exclaimed Frederick, as he threw himself at his feet; while Grace, unable to speak, ready to sink upon the ground beside him, with mingled feelings of confusion, joy, and regret—joy on her own account, and sorrow for the good General's disappointment—hid her tears and blushes upon the arm of the sofa.

"Good night, my children," said the General, in a faltering voice. "Frederick, you are not going to-morrow, we will meet at breakfast. I leave you now to plead with Grace for a speedy fulfilment of this your engagement. God bless you both. Grace, make my excuses to the party in the next room;—I will see you all to-morrow. Again, good night!" and the General left the library by another door.

We do not pretend to say that General

Craddock had no human feelings—suffered no disappointment.

We will not look into the hour or two which he passed by himself, after his guests had left the house.

Suffice it to say that he was calm and collected on the morrow, and that he felt he had given happiness to two beings, whose welfare was dearer to him than his own.

CHAPTER XIII.

“There’s nothing in this world can make me joy.”

SHAKSPEARE.

JULIA was in hopes that M'Donnell, finding his search fruitless, had given it up entirely.

The report which had been promulgated in France, of Mr. Morley's having taken her to Russia, had, she trusted, completely misled him ; and England, she was sure, would be the last place in which he would think of searching for her.

She knew that Mr. Morley, though distant, watched over her with the most anxious care ; and besides this, her religious views and studies made her feel more and more

that she was under the guidance and direction of a particular Providence.

Notwithstanding these consolatory ideas, however, all the anxieties and agitations which she had suffered had made a sensible impression upon her health. A clear, transparent paleness, never varied by a tinge of colour, had long since replaced her once lovely bloom, and on the slightest emotion, a nervous tremor, which she vainly endeavoured to overcome, thrilled to her fingers' ends.

But though the fair frame was mildewed and dulled with cares, the spirit—the living soul—was improving day by day.

This world, which, at her first entrance into it, had appeared all light and beauty, was now to her but the road—full of devious paths, and rocks, and hindrances—through which her pilgrimage to another land was to be performed.

What did it signify now to her prisoned

soul, if the slight clay edifice which held it still on earth should crumble into its native dust, when the everlasting heaven of heavens—unlimited space, ethereal beauty, enjoyments that “eye hath not seen nor ear heard of,” fitted for the spirit pluming its wings to ascend to its kindred spirits—were opening upon her.

Oh! if the frame became weary and wasted, and the poor heart ached at times, and the eye grew dim, and the loved one upon earth was distant, still the soul refreshed itself at the fountain of living waters, and prepared itself for flight.

It was only when Julia looked at her child, that she thought—

“A little longer—yet a little longer must I try to linger here below, then Morley will be able to take care of my Edmund; the darling child will not require a mother’s care.”

The late excitement, the anxiety she had felt about Grace, and the exertion she had been called upon to make, had been too much for her, and had rapidly increased those symptoms of languor and debility with which she was oppressed ; and notwithstanding the happiness which reigned throughout the Neville family—Grace's approaching marriage with Frederick Carrington, the good General's apparent reconciliation to his disappointment, Emmy's kindness for him, and Lucy's unfailing spirits—they could not help observing, with a deep regret, that their beloved Julia's strength seemed failing her, and that she was no longer able to accompany them, even in a short walk.

Such was the state of her health when Frederick Carrington received at the altar his so long and secretly beloved Grace, from the hands of General Craddock.

Mr. Griffith performed the ceremony in the village church.

Emmy and Lucy were then dressed as bridemaids, Julia beside them looking very pale, and trying to hide tears which would obtrude, as her own wedding day forced itself upon her memory, while many a rustic head was seen peeping over the gallery, to get by heart the white silk dress and orange flowers which decorated the fair bride.

The good General's voice did not falter, as he gave the newly married pair his paternal blessing; neither was his hand unsteady as he handed Grace into the carriage which was in waiting to convey them away immediately after the breakfast.

The same dinner was given to the tenantry, and the same rustic sport and dance kept up, as if it had been the General himself who had been married.

Young Talbot might be seen, as before, lingering on the lawn with Lucy, and reckoning up how soon she might be called upon to accompany her brother-in-law and sister to India, whither he expected to go very soon himself.

It was one of those young fancies which maturer years often ripen into love.

Emmy, though she had not yet any predilection for him, did not refuse this time to walk with young Davis, into whose ear she poured forth her pity for the dear good General's disappointment, and her assurance that, had she been in Grace's place, she never would have preferred Mr. Carrington to him.

Jones Davis, a handsome-looking youth, intended for the bar, and who was a great admirer of Emmy; listened with apparent interest, and a suppressed smile, to the sweet voice and melting eyes that expressed

such charming compassion, secretly hoping that in two or three years he might win her over himself to think differently upon the subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ Experience is by industry achieved,
And perfected by the swift course of time.”

SHAKSPEARE.

JULIA had a letter about this time from Australia, written by her cousin Jane.

Hitherto the letters she had received from thence, principally from her brother Redmond, had been rather of a gloomy character, but this one breathed of hope and happiness.

The settlers, including her two brothers, as well as the family of her uncle, were beginning to prosper. The young men were becoming accustomed to bush life. The

girls had put all their domestic knowledge into practice, and, notwithstanding the lack of servants, were managing to make their home comfortable. They had realized the truth of Aunt Milly's maxim, "that time spent in acquiring anything useful is never lost."

Jane had a great deal of news to tell. James had just been married to the pretty daughter of an old settler, with whom they had fortunately made acquaintance almost on their first landing, and whose practical knowledge had been of the greatest service to all the party. Then came a hint of the probability of Redmond Grahame being united, in the course of time, to her younger sister, Ellen. Her father did not disapprove of the match, provided they would wait for three or four years, until Redmond had been well initiated into the rough parts of a settler's life.

These were interesting subjects to write upon ; but what above all things spread a *couleur de rose* over every object in Australia for the happy Jane, was that her lover, the young clergyman, Mr. Somers, had written to inform her father that he had obtained an appointment as one of the missionaries to New Zealand, who were about to sail shortly for that part of the world, with the Bishop of — ; and that this appointment, added to a couple of thousand pounds, which had lately fallen to him by the death of an aunt, would enable him to offer Jane a home, without separating her entirely from her parents.

There were many points in this letter which were both pleasing and soothing to Julia. The marriage of her brother Redmond with his pretty cousin Ellen she had never anticipated ; and this she saw would fix him in the colony, and dissipate the re-

grets which were constantly turning his thoughts towards his old home.

The departure of Mr. Somers, Jane's intended husband, for Australia, soon started a new idea in her own mind. At first she turned away from it with terror, and tried to banish it from her thoughts, but still it rose before her as a salve for many difficulties.

M'Donnell had, at last, traced her to England, and was now on the search for her. Mr. Morley was obliged to inform her of it, in order to place her on her guard ; and she saw, from his letters, that he was tortured by a thousand anxious fears on her account.

Frederick Carrington and Grace, who had met him by appointment when on their wedding tour, could not conceal from her the state of his health. They would have evaded her eager inquiries had they been able, but her penetration, guided by her love, could not be baffled.

Morley was ill, and his terrors about her increased his ailment tenfold. Oh ! if she could have flown to him—have nursed him as she once did—have opened the inmost recesses of her heart to him, and imparted to ears that had always hung upon her slightest accents, the passionate love and devotion pent up within her breast !

Yet why should she not do so ? Morley was ill—away scruples !—away thoughts of what the world would say, after the publicity of her unhappy story !—for keep such a tale as secret as you can, the air whispers it, the winds become babblers. Oh ! if she could kneel at Morley's feet again, and place her cherub boy once more within his arms—if she could bathe his aching forehead, and breathe to him her love—remind him of some of their happy, happy, past days—happy, despite her secret remorse, for was she not then at his side ? Yes, Morley would be himself again, he would shake off

the languor that oppressed him, and smile as he was used to do ! Why should she attend to the opinion of the world ? Why not shut herself up with him, and forget all else on earth ? Was she not in heart and soul his wife ?

Thus raved the fond Julia one moment, but the next presented a different picture.

It showed her Morley, cold, dignified, repelling ; looking with contempt upon the woman who, despising the laws of God and man—despising the barrier which by his actions he had himself placed between them, thus tried to force herself into a position which she had irrevocably lost. And she, the wedded of another, could she so entirely forget what was due to herself—forget the demands of honour, the precepts of religion ?

No, she and Morley could never be what they once were to each other again. It was her own act, her own duplicity, that had caused his unhappiness and ill health. He,

the most noble-minded of men, was guiltless—his fault was only that he had “loved not wisely, but too well!” And ought she not to be the victim, and not Mr. Morley? Ought she not to hide her sorrow and disgrace somewhere far from his ken? By living in this country she must be always a blight upon his heart—a source of corroding uneasiness. Absent from this hemisphere, he might learn to forget. To forget her! O misery beyond expression!—to forget!

Yet it must be so. Yes, she would go to Australia. She would seek a refuge among her own family—Morley would regain his health—he would marry.

No, not that—any thing but that—no, she could not bear to think that another could fill her place in his heart. No, he would never marry, she was assured of it, but he would regain his health, his composure, his talents would no longer be

wasted—he would enter that political life for which he was so well fitted. She knew he had been entreated to stand for the county of ———. She would hear of him—she would see his name in the public prints—celebrity would mark his path—fame and honours would heal the wounds of his heart.

Julia had discovered that Mr. Morley had been to consult Doctor ———, in London—the General had inadvertently mentioned it, and that there had been a consultation of the faculty on his health; and as she knew his dislike to medical advice, her fears, already awakened, became but the more lively. She saw him in her nightly visions, she imaged him to herself in the day, not the Morley she had last parted with—although then he looked almost heart-broken—but the spectre of what he was, pale, dejected, and attenuated, hanging, as it were, upon the brink of the tomb.

Frequent were the recurrence of those reflections—long the struggle of this tender heart before it could decide on this self-immolation—for it was self-immolation to her, to leave that land whose earth was pressed by the foot of Morley—that air which had, perchance, sighed around the dwelling he inhabited.

But the struggle was over. Julia had decided. In six weeks the Bishop of —— was to sail for Australia, with a host of missionaries. Julia would take a passage in the vessel, her boy should go with her, and when old enough to be educated, she would send him to his father, in order that he should get the benefit of a good English education, and be fitted for a profession.

Mr. Morley was half distracted when he read Julia's announcement of her purpose.

He could not bear the thought of the immense distance that was to divide them.

Several letters passed between them on the

subject, but Julia was firm. She had persuaded herself that Morley's peace of mind and health depended upon this sacrifice, and her love made a duty of that which she knew, when it came to the point, would rend her poor heart in pieces.

Perhaps Mr. Morley would never have consented, had he not known that at the expiration of his furlough, it was the intention of Frederick Carrington to return to India, taking with him his beloved Grace and her two sisters, Harry being about to be adopted by the General ; and then what was to become of Julia ? Where would be the kind friend to sympathize with her ? Where the sister-like care to attend and soothe her, when she was ill and lonely ?

Yet, amidst all this perplexity and regret which Julia's determination awakened in the breast of Mr. Morley, as well as in her own, there was one point which afforded to both a secret sensation of pleasure — they

should meet again, were it but for a few hours.

Mr. Morley thought, on this their final separation, when the ocean was about to place its immeasurable depths between them, and another portion of the globe was going to receive his Julia, no prudence could deny the comfort of a last farewell to two people, who, once all the world to each other, would now most likely never meet more upon earth.

Julia thought so too, but she did not dare to express her wishes on paper; and when Mr. Morley mentioned it to her, the prospect of this one meeting again, seemed to her fond heart as if it would more than overpay all the pangs of absence.

Frederick Carrington had it in contemplation to take Grace to look at a few points of interest in the north of Devonshire, and then, as it was summer time, to proceed to Plymouth, there to embark in the steamer for London, whither the management of

some affairs for a friend in India called him.

On hearing their plans, Julia arranged to accompany them, and this route was a better one for her than a more direct mode of travelling could have been, as, should M'Donnell succeed in getting any information respecting her place of seclusion in Wales, so circuitous a journey would entirely prevent his tracking her to London.

CHAPTER XV.

“For where thou art, there is the world itself,
With every several pleasure in the world !
And where thou art not, desolation.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE excursion through Devonshire, though more rapid perhaps, on account of Julia's accompanying them, than they would otherwise have made it, was nevertheless fraught with the deepest pleasure to Frederick and Grace Carrington.

They were now in that beautiful season, just after a happy marriage, when every object in nature takes a brighter tint from the in-dwelling contentment of the heart, and man, rejoicing in having found his Eve, for-

gets how thorny may be the path they have to tread together.

Julia, full of anticipations of beholding again her beloved Morley, thought only on the meeting, and shut her eyes to the separation which was so rapidly to follow.

Silent and absorbed, but not looking so unhappy as usual, she threw no damp, by tears or sighs, on the satisfaction which beamed in the eyes of her companions—a satisfaction only interrupted by their sympathy for her.

We must not stop long at the spots which they loitered a little to look at, on their way towards Plymouth.

They embarked at Swansea, and paid a flying visit to Ilfracombe ;—but its precipitous tors, rugged coast, and curiously indented coves—fitting resort for mermaid, fair as her of Colonsay — its unrivalled sea-girt walk round the Capstan hill, in vain attempted to detain them.

One day spent in surveying its romantic environs, and climbing the steep ascent of Hillsborough rock, and the next morning the little party were on their way to Linton ; where, after visiting Watersmeet and Ilford Bridge, moonlight saw Frederick and Grace lingering amidst the Valley of Rocks.

Another day was spent at Clovelly ; and while Julia, with her nurse and child, sought the shade of a neighbouring wood, and seating themselves beneath the fantastic branches of the oaks that met over the stream, listened, shut out from the world, to the gurgling of waters hastening to lose themselves in the ocean ; the others scrambled now down the precipitous cliff, then up the steep defile through which descends, ladder-like, the singular little village of Clovelly, admiring on every side the remarkable combination of inland and maritime scenery which presented itself — the eye at one time resting on

the beautiful woods and undulating grounds of Clovelly Court, or directed sea-ward, from where the boughs and foliage dip themselves in the waves, taking in the island of Lundy, and the dim outline of the coast of Wales.

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True to the day and hour determined upon, they arrived in Plymouth, just in time to catch the steamer, which was to sail that evening for London.

London! there was a magic sound in the name to Julia's ear, for in London Morley was to meet her.

It was late when our travellers embarked on board the steam vessel, and the deepening twilight was fast concealing every object with its shadows.

A muffled figure, with a hat pulled over his eyes, leaned against the side of the vessel.

He approached them as they stepped on

the deck, shook hands with Carrington, greeted Grace hurriedly, and clasping the hand of Julia, who had shrunk back from the apparent stranger, gently drew her forward, and throwing a cloak round her, which he took from the arm of the nurse, who followed with the child, wrapped her carefully in it, and placed her under the shade of the awning. Then seating himself beside her, he took the boy in his arms.

It was Morley. — He was near her once more. They hardly spoke.

“ Julia ! ”

“ Morley ! ”

It was enough—what were words to the intercommunion of souls ! He held her hand fast clasped in his, and his child, as if conscious of a parent’s embrace, laid its head upon its bosom and nestled itself to sleep ; while the nurse, not knowing exactly what to make of it, walked to the other end of

the vessel, and seated herself near the steerage.

And they were happy for a time ; everything was forgotten but the present—happy, until the night dew began to descend, and the wind passed with a hoarse sigh through the rigging, and the stars hid themselves behind the dark clouds. Grace then approached, and whispered softly that it was getting cold and late.

Julia was quite warm — they would sit a little while longer—only a little while—she would send the child to rest.

The child was gone — still they sat in silence. Joy is often as silent as grief.

The wind blew colder, large drops of rain began to fall, the awning was about to be taken down—it was time to leave the deck. The “good night” was whispered from two full hearts, and each went to their berth to think of the other — to ponder on the past and future.

The spell of present bliss was broken.

* * * * *

Julia laid herself upon a low sofa in the ladies' cabin, and watched by the pale light of the lamp, while every one else slept. She could not compose herself sufficiently to sleep—the throbbing at her heart was too painful and distinct.

Now that she and Mr. Morley had met, the terror of being separated so soon from him damped her joy. She could not shut it out from her mind's eye as she had done before. Her voyage to London would be over in a few hours. Would that it could last for months! To sit beside him every evening, as she had just done, was all she asked.

Then she went over and over again every word he had spoken, and she tried to fancy how he looked, for the twilight was so obscure as they sat together, that she could hardly distinguish his features.—There was a melancholy cadence, she thought, in the

tone of his voice, different from what it used to be, and her fears, ever active, were re-awakened about his health.

Still she had seen him, and he was near—it was something to dwell upon.

Mr. Morley, too, was wakeful—the air of the cabin seemed to suffocate him, and he soon left it and went on deck.

The appearance of a storm had passed away, and the stars came out from behind the dark clouds, and the night assumed a calm aspect ; but no calm stole over his mind as connected with Julia—no star shone out from its deep gloom to brighten her fate.

Every point relating to her sad story had been minutely canvassed ; and the most eminent lawyers had assured him, that to court a public trial, was worse than useless, for both human and divine laws would pronounce her to be the wife of M'Donnell.

If, as a Christian, he had endeavoured to

be resigned to the heavy dispensation which had fallen upon him, and to struggle against human regrets, by turning to those pursuits and studies which alone could bring peace to his heart ; yet the wound was too recent to be healed, and that sentiment, which he hoped had softened into friendship, he found was still passionate love.

Everybody had retired to rest by this time ; only the mate who had the watch, and the man at the helm, seemed to be waking, and Mr. Morley found he had the deck all to himself.

The wind had sunk into a soft and measured sigh, as it swept round the vessel, and the quiet stillness of night, with her stars scattered here and there amidst the dark clouds, accorded better with his frame of mind than a bright moonlight would have done.

He paced the deck for some time, until,

weary at last, he threw himself upon a bench, when, giving himself up to sweet and bitter meditations, his thoughts fixed themselves entirely on Julia and his boy.

He, too, recalled every word she had uttered—pondered on the past—trembled for the future.

A low murmur of voices had been going on, under a covering raised near the funnel close to him, ever since he sat down. Occupied with his own reflections, it had fallen unnoted on his ear; at last an hysteric sob from a female voice attracted his attention.

Various as were the cares that weighed down the heart of Mr. Morley, the voice of distress had never been, nor could now, be unheeded by him. He started up on the instant, and began to consider what could be the cause of the repeated choking sobs which followed, and if it could be a case in which his assistance might be useful.

He paused and listened, irresolute what

to do—fearful of intruding on a grief which thus broke through the silence of night. Yet to be so near, and not to offer any help where pain, or death even, might be at work, seemed to him to be impossible.

While he thus hesitated as to what he should do, the words, “Do not weep so, my child, but unburden your poor sad heart to me,” uttered by the tremulous, unsteady voice of age, fell upon his ear.

Satisfied on hearing this, that the poor sufferer, whoever she might be, had a kind friend at hand; and perceiving from the tenor of the words which followed, that her ailment was more mental than bodily, Mr. Morley threw himself again upon the bench, and tried to resume the train of thought which had been interrupted; but the conversation at his ear, which had before been but a broken sentence, or word now and then, assumed a more connected form, and perceiving that it was a tale of misery, in

which pecuniary aid might be of use, he gave his attention to the dialogue which took place.

“I am but a poor woman, my child,” continued the same speaker, “and have not got much learning, so as to be able to advise you, but I have had my ups and downs in this world, and a great deal of experience; perhaps this latter may be of use to you in your need. Tell me, then, why you grieve so piteously? It may be that a kind Providence will teach me to find out a way to help you.”

“You have been very good to me to-day,” replied a female voice, in an accent which though not unpleasing, sounded to Mr. Morley’s ear to be slightly Scottish; “if you had not assisted me, when Lilly was taken with a fit, I am sure the poor thing would have died.”

“She is a delicate little flower,” replied

the old woman, "but I have often seen children, subject to like fits, grow up to be strong, healthy young women. I think you told me she was only eight years old. It's but a mere child still, poor thing! and so thin and weakly for her age to be sure—but children's constitutions change wonderfully."

"Yes—eight years old last spring," responded the other, with a deep sigh. "She was born in the midst of trouble, poverty, and sorrow; and I suppose it's that which makes her so weakly."

"I would not have you fret so much about the fits," replied the old woman. "With the help of God, Lilly will grow up to be a comfort and a blessing to you yet."

"Ah! I do not deserve she should be a blessing to me," answered the other; "a disobedient daughter, as I have been, does not deserve to find a blessing in her child. But I will tell you my story, and what is my present distress."

CHAPTER XVI.

Incens'd to sevenfold rage, the tempest foams ;
And o'er the trembling pines, above, below,
Shrill through the cordage howls, with notes of
woe."

FALCONER.

" MY father was a small farmer, residing on the borders of Scotland, and I was his only child.

" Although not rich, he was very comfortable ; and as there was plenty of servants to do the work, I was brought up almost like a lady. My mother, who was most hard-working herself, never would allow me to help her in the dairy, and I was as ignorant how to milk a cow, as if I had lived in London.

“ My father sometimes remonstrated with my poor mother, as he thought a girl should learn how to do everything about a farm, but my mother always replied, by saying, ‘ That it would come easy enough to me hereafter, and that nobody could knit or spin better than Effie.’

“ Once I heard her tell him that Effie was too pretty to spoil her hands with coarse household work, and that she was sure I should, some day or other, be married to a lord. I never forgot this speech, so flattering to my vanity, although my father was very angry, at the time, with my poor mother for making it, and said, ‘ the girl will become quite spoiled, and good for nothing.’

“ The place we lived in was very retired, and as I sat at my spinning wheel, I often longed to see more of the world, but I never went beyond the farm, except to kirk ; and there, there was nobody to be seen but

farmers with their wives, and sons, and daughters—all of our own class.

“After what I had heard my mother say, I looked with a great contempt upon all the farmers’ sons, and upon our other rustic neighbours ; and this feeling was increased by an incident which occurred one day, as I sat in an idle mood upon a low stile, leading into a hayfield.

“ ‘Pretty one,’ said a voice at my ear, ‘will you make room for me to pass over this stile?’

“I looked up, and perceived a dark gipsy woman, with a child at her back. It was very strange, that the gipsy should make her appearance just at this moment, when my thoughts were employed about gipsies.

“I had heard there was an encampment of them lately come into the neighbourhood, and was thinking at the instant how much I should like to seek it out.

“The truth was, I wanted to have my fortune told, which my father sternly prohibited me from doing, as he said it was both idle and foolish.”

“It was a temptation of the evil one, and I hope you resisted it,” ejaculated the old woman.

“You shall hear,” responded the younger voice, with a deep sigh. “I got up immediately to let the woman pass, but she looked at me and loitered.

“‘I should like to know if there is not good fortune in store for somebody,’ said she, catching hold of my hand.

“‘Not for me,’ said I; ‘nobody ever comes here but poor people like ourselves, and I promise you I don’t care to be married to one of them.’

“‘How do you know but that some one may come, my pretty maid? But you shall hear what I have to tell you, if you will

cross my hand with a piece of silver. It may be that you are to ride in your own coach, one of those days.'

" 'I have no money,' replied I, half frightened; for my father's prohibition recurred to me, and I endeavoured to draw away my hand; which, however, she held quite fast.

" 'This will do,' said she, stooping down and picking up my silver thimble, which I had accidentally dropped from off my finger. 'Now let us see;' and she seemed to read intently the lines in my hand.

" 'Pretty one!' said she, at last, 'you will find your fortunes over the sea. Wealth and happiness await you;—a young and handsome man, with blue eyes and fair hair, will soon seek you for his wife.'

" 'As much frightened as pleased at what the gipsy told me, I took care not to mention a word of it at home, knowing how angry my father would be with me.

“ I pondered over it day and night, wondering how it would all come to pass, but not having a doubt of its fulfilment.

“ A month or two afterwards, a young man, a first cousin, came to pay us a visit—I had never seen him before.

“ My uncle, who was my father’s brother by the mother’s side, my grandmother having been twice married, had left the neighbourhood when very young, to seek his fortune elsewhere ; and having a turn for the law, had entered into an attorney’s office, and risen step by step in the world. All I knew of him, however, was that he had married well, was wealthy, and that this was his only child.

“ My father, in the very few letters that passed between him and his brother, had expressed a wish to see him, or some of his family, at the old farm-house ; and the young man, who had been brought up to a sea-

faring life, and was of a wandering disposition, came over during an interval of spare time which he had.

“ I do not know how it was that I fancied my cousin, unless it was because I perceived that he was immediately taken with me. I endeavoured all I could to persuade myself that he must be the husband promised by the gipsy, although his eyes and hair were of a different colour from those she had foretold. I observed that my father did not like him from the first—he was not an agriculturist—and then, he was fond of smoking, which my father considered an idle habit. However, he did not take much notice of us for a time.

“ One morning he called me into the garden, and said to me, ‘ Effie, I see how it is—my nephew has a great mind to make love to you—do not encourage him. I see plainly that he is an idle dog; besides, I do not like first cousins marrying.’ ”

“Two very good reasons, my child,” observed the old woman; “I hope you did not disobey your father.”

“You shall hear,” replied the other, with a sigh.

“It was Allhallow eve, and a party of the young farmers and their sisters being invited to spend the evening with us, we set to burn nuts, and play small plays; among others, we melted lead in an iron spoon over the fire, and then holding the key of the hall door, which was large and massy, over a bason of cold water, poured the liquid lead through the wards. It fell into the water with a hissing sound, and formed all manner of shapes. Each young girl tried what fate would bring her. Annie Murray got a coach, with the driver and horses, and I got a ship manned and rigged twice running.”

“Silly child!” exclaimed the old woman;

while Mr. Morley listened attentively to the simple tale.

“How unkindly soever Gilbert may have treated me since,” continued the narrator, “he was passionately fond of me then. His stay was nearly come to a close, and in a few days he was to leave us——”

“‘Effie,’ said he to me, one morning, ‘I see your father dislikes me—he will never give you to me for a wife. I know, besides, that my own father would never hear of my marrying you. I cannot live without you; you are the only girl in the world that I ever fancied, and I know you love me. It is downright cruelty in your father to cross our inclinations thus. Let us then marry without our parents’ consent, Effie, and ask their forgiveness afterwards.’

“I cannot tell you all the arguments my cousin used. Suffice it to say that, although startled and shocked at such a proposal at

first, I consented at last. A private marriage in Scotland is easily managed,—my nurse, whom I had won over by caresses and tears, was one of three witnesses to my cousin's avowal that he took me as his wife.

“Gilbert was now my husband, and, wicked, disobedient daughter that I was, I felt no scruple in leaving my quiet, happy home, with an acquaintance of yesterday.”

“It was a good marriage, was it?” asked the old woman, doubtingly.

“Yes, it was a good marriage, and would stand in any court,” replied the young woman, sorrowfully. “But what of that? it was a wicked thing to do.”

“It's well it was no worse,” said the old woman; “but go on.”

“I packed up all my clothes, and left the house with my husband in the middle of thenight. My heart sprung to my mouth as we stole through the farm yard, and drew

back the bars of the great gate. The watchdog started up and growled — then moaned softly when he heard my voice, and laid down again ; it was a sad night for me, the night I passed through that gate. Gilbert had plenty of money, so we were not long in getting over our journey.”

“ Had you far to travel ? ” inquired the old woman.

“ Yes, we had a good many miles to get over,” returned the other, “ and the sea to cross too, for Gilbert’s father did not live in Scotland. But he did not take me to his father’s house. He left me at a little lonely way-side inn for a day or two in the neighbourhood of it, to try and smooth matters, he said ; for he knew what his father’s rage would when he heard he was married. My husband did not return to me for a week, and my heart misgave me that all was not well.

“ At length he arrived one afternoon, much

agitated, and said, ‘Effie, we must start immediately, as I have received orders to join my vessel this evening.’ ‘Oh, Gilbert!’ I exclaimed, ‘how could you leave me so many days in expectation, and never tell me your plans or whither we are going?’ Gilbert’s brow looked dark as night while he replied,—

“ ‘You do not know all I have suffered for you, Effie.’

“ I trembled beneath the expression of his countenance, and a sickness like death came over me.

“ ‘Come, Effie, cheer up,’ said he, and he kissed me,—then he muttered,—‘We should never have been married had I known as much as I do now of my father’s plans, but it cannot be helped.’ Then he paused, looked at me, and continued,—

“ ‘Do not distract me, Effie, with your tears’—for I could not help crying—‘I am almost beside myself as it is.’

“ ‘ Have you told your father that we were married ?’ inquired I, still sobbing.

“ ‘ Told my father that I was married !’ he exclaimed, almost choking with passion. ‘ No, woman, I should never have dared to cross his threshold again, had I done so.’

“ Alas ! I saw that Gilbert had repented of his marriage already. The punishment of my disobedience had begun, and I only one short fortnight a wife ! But I am making my story too long.”

“ No, no,” said the old woman, “ it does the heart good to unburden itself sometimes.”

Mr. Morley’s sympathies were all awakened, and he did not lose a single word.

The young woman gave a short sob, and continued,—

“ That evening, after a rapid and hurried journey of several miles, we embarked on board the vessel, and by the morning were entirely out of sight of the land.

“ Gilbert was rather sullen, but he was not positively unkind to me, and before we were a fortnight at sea he had quite softened down.

“ One night, as I lay awake in my berth, thinking with a heavy heart of my disobedience, and of the grief my parents must endure, Gilbert came down from the deck where he had been keeping watch, and told me not to be frightened at the storm which was rising.

“ Until he mentioned it, I had made but little account of the wind which was growling around the vessel on every side, so occupied was I with unpleasant thoughts. I assured him I felt no dread, and he went away again.

“ Soon the storm rose higher, and the cabin where I lay was illuminated with thick flashes of lightning, while peal after peal of the loudest thunder I ever heard, followed

each other with a frightful rapidity. The vessel swayed so violently that I could hardly keep myself in the berth by clinging to the wood-work, and at last a shock came that threw me almost lifeless on the floor.

“It seemed to me as if the timbers of the vessel were separating, and I heard, as in a dream, voices, exclamations of terror, and feet running here and there upon the deck, while a noise of waters gurgling around on every side, told me that the ship was in imminent danger.

“Unable to move or speak, I know not how long I lay there. I was not, however, quite senseless, as I had afterwards a faint recollection of many things. I could recal a wild cry of ‘Breakers again!’ and ‘The bowsprit is gone!’ followed by a shock which seemed to split the ship in shivers, then a sound of waters rising high over the deck, and rushing through the cabin. At this

time it seemed as if death had laid fast hold of me, and I had no more consciousness until I felt some one carrying me up the ladder, rolling me up in a cloak, and letting me down into a boat.

“I now began to revive, and saw plainly, by the light of the vivid lightning, for otherwise the night was pitchy dark, the frightful situation we were in—now we were on the top of a mountain wave—then precipitated beneath, as if the ocean had opened its immense abyss to swallow us up.

“Presently a cry, ‘She is gone!—gone to the bottom!’ struck upon my ear. ‘What is gone?—tell me!’ I exclaimed, and I tried to raise myself on my elbow, for I was laid in the bottom of the boat, but no one answered me. All eyes were turned to one spot—I looked too, but there was nothing to be seen through the sheets of lightning but a black void, with a howling sky above, and a foam-

ing surge beneath. Then I caught, amidst this frightful commotion of elements, the voice of Gilbert encouraging the rowers.

“ Suddenly the boat was upset.

“ There was a fearful cry.

“ I felt myself sinking amidst the horrid waves—a sense of suffocation came over me. I struggled, but the waters filled my ears, my mouth, my nostrils. Yet memory remained while my senses were failing. ‘ Thus is the disobedient daughter punished,’ rung in my deafening ears, while my childhood and youth in the old farm house, with the last night I left it, appeared fixed in one picture before my drowning eyes.

“ Never shall I forget that moment, when death held me in his grasp, and my fainting soul sunk into insensibility.”

CHAPTER XVII.

“Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it :
The winds did sing it to me.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“It was dreadful, my child,” said the old woman, “to die with such a sin upon your soul, and no forgiveness asked for from your parents.”

“Alas ! yes, it was indeed dreadful,” replied the young woman. “I had never written to ask their forgiveness, and the thought of it was a sore burden upon my heart then. But to go on. — How long I remained in the water, I cannot tell. The first sensation I felt was that of excessive

pain in all my limbs. I opened my eyes. I was lying upon a sandy beach, and Gilbert was bending over me.

“That moment was one of joy, for Gilbert started with such an appearance of happiness, when I looked at him, that I felt assured he must love me still. I soon heard from him that we were the only people on board who were saved — every other soul had perished. He had clung to a spar when the boat was upset, and had been thrown on the shore. How I came there he could not tell.—I suppose I too was cast there by one of those mountain waves.

“Our situation was truly deplorable.—Sorely bruised, hungry, and with very little clothes to cover us, we should certainly have died, had we not been almost immediately discovered by some country people, who came down to see if any waifs had been thrown on shore after the storm. Upon in-

quiring of them, Gilbert found that the breakers we had run upon were off Cape Fear, and that the spot where we were cast on shore, was not far from George Town, in South Carolina.

“ These people good-naturedly carried us to the house of an American merchant who resided in the neighbourhood. There we were compassionately received, well housed and cared for, and in a week or two, when we were tolerably well recovered, Gilbert began to consider what we should do. As to writing to his father and informing him of his safety, he told me, with his old dark look, that was a thing he should not do in a hurry,—his father would never forgive him or own him for a son, on account of his marriage with me. He was determined, therefore, to remain in the United States for the present, and make his fortune there as he could.

“ All this was a dagger to my heart.— We were to live in a strange land.—I was the bar to his return to his own country. I begged of him, at least, to let me write to my parents, and tell them what had become of me, but he said, ‘ No, Effie, I do not want them, or any one else, to know any thing about us at present.’ ”

“ It was a cruel and unnatural prohibition, my child,” said the old woman, energetically ; “ you did not obey him ? ”

“ Alas ! yes,” replied the younger voice, “ I dared not cross him in any thing he determined on. — However, to continue my story — Gilbert was offered a lucrative employment, as overseer to a large estate, by the kind merchant who had so hospitably taken us in. This he immediately accepted, although it was not the kind of situation he liked, having never been used, since he was a boy, to any sort of life but the sea—the

intermediate time between his voyages being spent in roaming about and restless gaiety.

“ My part was to look after a large dairy, and direct the negresses, who performed all menial occupations, in their work ; this, by dint of giving my whole attention to it, and by the most minute care, I effected to the entire satisfaction of the good man who employed us. I likewise, when the dairy work permitted, taught the young slave girls to spin and knit.

“ Thus passed away a year, during which time I became mother to my poor little Lilly. I had hoped that the birth of my child would have softened my husband’s morose disposition, but I was disappointed. It was not that he was always unkind — by fits and starts he appeared fond of me and the baby ; but I saw that he sorely repented of his hasty marriage, and this made his temper moody and uneven.

“At those times he would walk up and down the room, talking to himself—sometimes he would stop, stamp his foot, and cry out, ‘Fool!—fool that I was!’ and strike his forehead with his clenched hand.”

“Perhaps he was becoming crazy,” interrupted the old woman.

“No, no—not crazy,” replied the younger; “but, alas! he was meditating a bitter wrong to me and the child. I know it, for once I heard him mutter, ‘She is useful, and serves them well, and they will be sure to take care of her and her child.’ I did not mind it then, but I thought of it afterwards. Gilbert was often used to be out very late at night. Had I sat up for him, he would have raged with passion, and said I wanted to watch him, so I had been in the habit of putting Lilly to sleep, and, when it got late, of laying down beside her.

“One morning, when I had the breakfast

ready, I sought for Gilbert, but he was not to be found. I waited for some time—still he came not. I gave Lilly her breakfast, but I had no mind to eat myself, so I busied myself about my usual employments—saw the cows milked and the cream set, and gave the slave girls their tasks of spinning and knitting as customary.

“Dinner time arrived, but no Gilbert made his appearance, and soon I perceived there were strange whisperings and surmises among the work-people whom he was accustomed to oversee—then my heart began to misgive me sadly. Alas! the truth soon burst upon me—Gilbert was gone!—gone, and left me and the baby to make it out as we could!—But what serves it to talk about this now?” continued the young woman, with a heart-broken sob: “I never saw Gilbert again.”

“But are you sure that your husband went away and left you purposely?” in-

quired the old woman ; “ perhaps some accident happened to him—perhaps he came by a sudden death ? ”

“ I thought at first it might be so,” sobbed the young woman ; “ but no—I soon found, almost to a positive certainty, that he had that evening gone on board a vessel whose destination was not known.”

“ Poor thing ! ” ejaculated the old woman.
“ How I pity you ! ”

* * * * *

And Morley felt that his heart pitied her too.

“ Notwithstanding the anger of our kind employer at my husband’s behaviour,” continued the young woman, after she had ceased sobbing, “ he did not visit his follies upon me, but retained me in the same situation until his death, which took place a few months ago. This was a new misfor-

tune for me. The heirs came down and sold the property, and I have been thus thrown out of bread, not being able to procure any other situation, on account of having this sickly child with me. I therefore took the resolution of returning to England, and seeking for employment there."

"And you have no further clue—no knowledge of what could have become of your unworthy husband, my child?" inquired the old woman.

"None," replied the younger one, "none—I never heard of Gilbert again."

"It may be that he went to the diggings at California," observed the old woman; "both passengers and sailors on board this vessel are full of accounts of the quantity of gold to be found there, and some men will go anywhere for that, although I have heard tales that made my flesh creep, of the murders and fatal events which occur there.

The wealth of England is but dust and ashes, they say, compared to the gold to be picked up in those diggings."

"No—he never went thither," said the young woman; "there was no talk of such a place then. If it were now he left me, I might think so, for he was fond of a life of adventure."

"Perhaps your father and mother would be willing to receive a penitent daughter," resumed the other speaker, in a compassionate voice. "I would advise you, my poor child, to seek their protection at once; you ought to know, by what you feel for your own child, what depths of affection are in a parent's heart."

"Alas!" replied the young woman, "I have every reason to believe that they are both dead. Would they were alive!—I should not then feel so utterly forlorn; and perhaps one of my greatest miseries is

the thought that my undutiful desertion may have helped to shorten their days. After Gilbert left me, I wrote to make inquiries about them—I did not dare to address a penitential letter to them until I heard how they had borne up against my unnatural conduct—the answer was, that my poor fond mother had died a few months after my elopement; and that my father, broken-hearted from her loss, and so far gone in a decline that his death was inevitable, had sold the farm, and departed nobody knew where.”

“God help you, poor child!” ejaculated the old woman. “You must seek a service then,—but Lilly will be a great bar to you. We have all of us our troubles, and must lend a helping hand to each other to bear the burden of them as well as we can. I lost my poor old husband lately; he was a sergeant, and we lived pretty comfortably upon

his pension, whilst he lived. Having nothing to support myself, I am now going to London to my daughter, who is a widow, and takes in washing. Perhaps, amongst the families she washes for, she might be able to get you a place, and as she has several children of her own, you could board Lilly with her, and she could go to school with them. I could offer you a home with my daughter for a day or two," continued the old woman, with increasing kindness of manner, "for Nancy had always a good heart, and can feel for those in trouble."

"How kind you are!" exclaimed the young woman. "Your advice is very good, and I fear it will be in vain for me to hope for a situation in which I may keep Lilly with me. God knows, it will almost break my heart to part with her."

"There are free schools in London for little girls, where they are taught every thing

neecessary for them to know, in order to enable them to earn their bread," replied the old woman. "My grandchildren go to one of these ; and Nancy writes me word, that there are charitable ladies who visit it constantly, and see that the children are properly instructed."

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ True, I talk of dreams.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE murmur of voices continued for some time longer, but Mr. Morley had ceased to listen. A vague kind of stupor, which could hardly be called sleep, stole over him, and troubled dreams haunted this uneasy slumber.

Now it was Julia who appeared before him. She came in all that agony of grief, in which she had cast herself at his feet, in the first moment of the fatal discovery of her prior marriage. Her long hair hid her face. Clinging to his knees with one hand,

as she knelt to him, her other arm clasped her boy. "Morley!" she cried, in accents of despair, "do not abandon me!—am I not your wife? Is not this your child? Leave me not—oh! leave me not thus."

Distracted with her grief, full of love and compassion, he endeavoured to raise her from the ground, but the form faded from his grasp, and in its stead a lifeless corpse lay at his feet.

Then came another figure, pale and shadowy, with a starved-looking child at her side. She was a stranger, he had never seen her before, yet as he gazed on her, her features seemed to take the form of Julia's—"Gilbert is gone," she cried, "gone and left us!"

Morley started up and looked around him.

The first faint streaks of the dawn were apparent in the east, and the stars were hiding themselves one by one. Soon the

deck became alive with busy feet, and voices began to be heard in the steerage.

Running his eye over the various descriptions of people assembled there, Mr. Morley fixed upon a young woman, seated by a benevolent-looking, but poverty-stricken dame, as the person whose story had interested him so much ; and as he looked at them both, sitting side by side, he thought, " How often do the poor befriend the poor ! "

Effie was a pretty, dark-eyed brunette, lowly and dejected, with a sickly, pale child at her knee. She was dressed in that sort of plain attire which might belong to either gentle or simple, and excites no attention ; a straw bonnet and large wrapping cloak. He approached, and addressed her in kind accents, noticing the sickly appearance of her child ; and though retiring, and properly reserved in her manner, and not seeming to wish to attract the attention of a stranger,

he contrived to elicit from her the substance of what she had confided to her elderly companion on the preceding night.

He had no reason to suspect the truth of her details, for there was that in her air and look of simplicity, and singleness, which brings immediate conviction to the heart ; yet what was to be done for the poor young woman ? He himself, although occasionally occupying lodgings in London, knew not how to direct her to proceed in her search for a situation.

He did not think she could fall on a better plan, for the present, than the one chalked out for her by the old woman. Perhaps he might meet with some female friend, whom he could interest on her behalf, and who would examine into her qualifications ; and in the mean time, as he found from her that she was without any resources, having expended her last dollar in paying her passage up to

London, he insisted on her accepting sufficient to enable her to pay for her board and lodging for some weeks, at the house of the good old woman's daughter, Nancy.

He at the same time gave his address to the old woman, and bade her call on him in a day or two, with particulars as to how the young woman fared, and what chance there was of her being able to get into a respectable employment.

Effie's gratitude and thankfulness were deep, but not loud—her tears said more than her words. Her aged companion was more garrulous, and overwhelmed Morley with prayers and blessings.

They had now arrived in the river, and it would be soon time to disembark. Julia and Grace, accompanied by Mr. Carrington, made their appearance on deck, and Mr. Morley forgot his new acquaintances for the time.

Once or twice in the course of the ensuing days, he wondered that the old woman did not call; but absorbed by a thousand contending emotions, and occupied as he was in arranging everything for Julia's melancholy voyage, it is not surprising that the incident soon escaped altogether from his memory.

The Carringtons had taken convenient lodgings at no great distance from the Park, and Julia was their guest as long as she remained in London.

Notwithstanding the regret which Grace felt at this approaching separation from a friend, only the more loved and valued for her misfortunes, she could not help acknowledging that Julia was about to take the wisest step that she could possibly do, in her present position. Dark was the cloud which must hang over the life of her unhappy friend; but she trusted that the sin-

cere piety and humble trust in God, which had sprung up in her bosom, united to the occupation of bringing up her child, and to the kindly feelings which an association with beloved relatives, the companions of her childhood, would awaken, might bring—not happiness—that was impossible,—but peace to her poor heart.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ Worldly cares may sever wide—
Distant far their paths may be—
But the bond of Death untied,
They shall once again be free.”

C. W. THOMPSON.

A FEW days more, and Julia was to leave England. Through the zeal and exertions of Frederick Carrington, she had been introduced to the Bishop's wife.

Although she naturally wished for an incognito, which was desirable for her present comfort, and to shield her from the observations of the curious, as it was necessary, in order to hide her from the pertinacious search which M'Donnell was making after

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her, there was no reason why the Bishop's wife (formerly Miss Emily Molesworth) should not be made acquainted with her real name and history.

Young and interesting-looking more than beautiful—interesting from the gentleness of her manners, and the apparent delicacy of her health—Mrs. ——— had been only a short time married. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Molesworth, lately returned from the continent, and now residing at Molesworth Hall, would hardly have consented to a match which separated their daughter so entirely from them, had they not hoped that the long voyage and change of climate, so beneficial to consumptive patients, might eradicate the seeds of that fatal disorder which was already making its appearance in their beloved child.

To what end keep the pale girl in England, but to fade and wither like her sister blossoms?

Julia and Mrs. ——— mutually liked each other. Pity and compassion drew them together.

It was enough for Mrs. ——— that Julia had lived at Molesworth Hall, to make her value her acquaintance. How many subjects of interest would they not have to converse upon during the voyage? Every nook in the house, every walk and path in the grounds, was fraught for each with interesting remembrances. To Julia, as being the spot where she had spent so much time after her marriage with Mr. Morley—to Mrs. ———, as having been her early home and the abode of her parents.

Mr. Morley was pleased to find that Julia was likely to meet with a friend in the Bishop's wife—if, indeed, that feeling could be entitled to the name of pleasure, which ameliorated, in a slight degree, the anxieties he felt for her comfort and convenience on so long a voyage.

As the parting day drew nigh, he did not dare to give himself up to the sad enjoyment of spending the few remaining hours with Julia. The feelings of both were too intense, to bear such companionship.

That which, at a distance, seemed a positive happiness—the seeing each other again—the looking once more on each dear face, now that the hour of separation was at hand, brought too much of agony with it to be endurable.

Julia felt it was cruelty to Morley to keep him entirely at her side ; Morley saw that Julia, although unshaken in her resolution of going to Australia, would die of despair if their parting was prolonged.

Love alone gave Julia courage to put her resolution into practice ; her woman's heart would have failed her in the last hour, had she not seen the necessity of her departure

from England. The nervous tremor of Morley's hand—the haggard expression of his countenance—the change which a few months had made in his whole appearance, told her that his constitution would never bear up against the wearing anxieties which her protracted stay in England would occasion him.

Fond and weak woman as she was too, notwithstanding her constant prayers—her strong religious feelings—her earnest wish to atone, by her tears and repentance for her former disingenuity, she distrusted herself.

She felt that if Morley did but throw himself at her feet—did but entreat her to remain in England, and for him—to be again, despite all other ties, his Julia, her struggle would be dreadful—she trusted that her Christian principles would conquer, but she knew her life would be the sacrifice. She dared not tempt the trial.

But Morley loved too well to degrade the woman he adored ; and while he looked upon her as an angel whose tears had washed away the fault, induced, at first, more by the thoughtlessness of youth than by an intentional wrong towards him, his only consolation was that of meeting her again pure and beautiful, in that better world towards which his hopes, his thoughts, his studies, had of late tended.

He had restricted himself to one short visit on the last day. It was paid ; and though Julia was to embark on the morrow, he did not lengthen it—he only said in a hurried manner, as he rose to leave her, after having sat the whole time in silence, that he would see her at ten o'clock on the following morning, just before she went on board.

Julia did not reply ; she too had sat silent all the time with her child, who had wearied

himself from play, lying asleep on her lap, and her tearful eyes fixed upon the ground—she only returned the convulsive pressure of his hand—she could not speak—despair is silent.

CHAPTER XX.

“ Come vivrò, ben mio,
Cosè lontan da te ?”

METASTASIO.

JULIA retired to her room early, but she did not intend to go to rest that night. She felt that nothing but prayer could quiet and console her mind.

Dismissing the nurse, and seating herself beside her little boy, who lay fast asleep in a small cot in the dressing room, she tried to collect her thoughts and calm the agitation of her heart.

To-morrow !—it would be the last day—they would never meet again.

Never! How like a death bell the word tolled upon her ear!—With what a dirge-like sound it rung to her heart!—never!

Julia drew from her bosom one of Morley's letters, which she took a particular pleasure in perusing.

It was that one relating to a future state, and to the recognition of each other in the regions of the blest. She read it two or three times over—then she knelt and prayed.

The more she considered the step she was about to take, the more she was satisfied as to its desirableness.

Yet it was hard to go, and the weak woman trembled, though the spirit was strong.

Then she looked at her boy. It was so good—it was so considerate of Morley to allow her to take him with her. Yes, he was all goodness—God would bless him, and they would meet again in a better world, where all tears would be wiped away.

Thus she sat — sometimes an agony of grief, then a prayer. Grace respected her poor friend's sorrow, and left her entirely to herself — friendship could do nothing for her — God alone could comfort her.

Julia thought she had nerved herself for this final separation. Were they not separated before? Why then, sad heart, thus sink into the dust? Why then conjure up again those sad reflections — this bitterness of sorrow? Was not thy cup full before? Awake from this anguish, and turn to thy God for help.

A fresh burst of tears, and Julia prayed again. Presently she heard a knock at the hall door. How her heart fluttered! — A fire, like that of electricity, ran through her frame. It was very late — past eleven o'clock. Who could it be?

It could not be Morley — he would not come at that hour — he said “to-morrow.”

All was silent for about twenty minutes. Then there was a soft tap at the door.

“Come in.”

Grace put in her head.

“My dear Julia, Mr. Morley is below,” said she; “he wishes to see you for five minutes. Can you admit him?”

“Certainly,” replied Julia, trembling.

The door closed.

She rose from her seat — then she sat down again. What could he have to say to her? He said he would not see her until to-morrow.

Then she clasped her hands together, and looked up to heaven, and she tried to breathe a prayer for strength in the coming conflict. If he should ask her to stay? Almighty God, support her. She must not remain — her path is on the dark waters.

The door opened again. Morley entered the room. He was [so suffocated with

emotion, he could hardly speak, but he took her hand in his—he pressed it to his lips—it was bathed with his tears—then he clasped her to his heart.

“ Julia ! ” he said, “ my Julia ! you must stay—you are mine—mine on earth as well as in heaven. There was a prior marriage. M'Donnell was married to another before the ceremony which passed between him and you, in your father's study. You are not his wife—you are mine—my own wedded Julia—Providence has made it all plain. Accident, or rather the hand of Providence, led me this afternoon to —— . There I met with Effie's father—you remember the young woman I mentioned to you, whose story I overheard on the night we came up from Plymouth—Gilbert M'Donnell was her husband. By a wonderful chain of circumstances, I have this evening made out every link in the evidence. No shadow—no cloud hangs

over the birth of our child. Look up, dear one ! No more separation — no more concealment or mystery !”

“ What is all this ?” said Julia faintly, for her head grew giddy and her eyes swam ; “ is it an illusion—a dream ? Speak it over again—tell it to me all over again, Morley, again—oh ! say it again—am I indeed your wife ?”

“ My wife—my best beloved — my own ! But calm yourself, dearest, calm yourself.—Trust me, love — surely you know I would not deceive you ?”

“ Oh ! no,” said Julia, “ no, it is not that—but it is such happiness ! I do not deserve it. How can it be so ? Tell it to me over again.”

And Morley told it to her all over again.

Julia heard as in a dream. It was as if heaven was opened, and sweet sounds and choral songs of angels were ringing in her

ears—a foretaste of that perfect happiness where all is love.

Yet it was some time before she could fancy it was real. It hung about her mind that it was a vision of paradise—that a sudden death had translated her into the other world, and she said something wildly about angels having carried her thither.

Morley trembled as she lay quite motionless upon his bosom, lest the sudden re-action might be too powerful for her frame, and he continued to soothe her, until a passion of tears relieved her full heart. Joy has its tears as well as grief.

Yes, they were happy. Such moments are given to mortals, to shew them what must be the excess of that rapture to the glorified spirit, when ages never-ending are to be fraught with the fulness of ineffable joy.

Soon their chastened souls turned to the

source from whence their happiness came ; and as they kneeled in prayer and thanksgiving—their hearts full of praise and gratitude—beside the cot where slept calmly and sweetly the young heir of Morley, they felt as our great progenitors did before the fall, when they sang in the garden of Eden their first evening hymn.

And angels, though unseen, smiled rejoicingly, and spread their wings over Morley and his Julia, as they thus knelt and prayed beside the couch of their child.

“ I have promised our kind friends,” said Mr. Morley, at length rising, “ that if you were able, my Julia, we would join them in the sitting-room, where they wait for me ; and that I would then relate the incidents which led to this blessed discovery. Will you be able to go down for a little while ? ”

“ O yes,” exclaimed Julia, “ any where now, so you are with me ; ” and she raised

her deep blue eyes, swimming in tears of joy, to heaven.

Morning stole upon them, before the party of friends thought of separating ; so deeply interested were Frederick Carrington and Grace in all they had to learn.

Elastic was Mr. Morley's step—light his heart—as he trod the dingy streets of London at this early hour. “Brickdust Moll,” as eloquent now as was her ancestor one hundred and forty years ago, had not yet “screamed through half the street ;” neither had the schoolboy begun to lag, with his “satchel in his hand,” although, indeed, a stray bailiff might be spied here and there, “about to take his silent stand.”

Soon, however, the various cries were heard on every side, in cadences, some shrill, some deep, as Mr. Morley made the best of his way to a shipping office, to withdraw the various packages and luggage

which were that morning to be sent on board the vessel in which Julia's passage had been so recently taken.

From thence he turned his steps towards the chambers of one of the first lawyers in England, with whom he had had an interview on the preceding evening, and whose judgment,—before in favour of M'Donnell's right,—had pronounced that right to be nullified, without a shadow of doubt, on looking over the documents which Mr. Morley had to shew him.

Leaving them to talk over matters, and to arrange every thing to their satisfaction, let us see what it was which led to this unexpected discovery; and turning back a little, let us accompany Mr. Morley's footsteps, when he left Julia in the forenoon of the preceding day, with the melancholy prospect of seeing her on board the vessel bound for Australia in the course of the next twenty-four hours.

CHAPTER XXI.

“ So Zembla’s rocks (the beauteous work of frost)
Rise white in air, and glitter o’er the coast.”

POPE.

MR. MORLEY walked, he knew not nor cared whither—in the distraction of his thoughts, continued motion was necessary to him.

At length he found himself in the centre of a hum of voices, and raising his eyes, he perceived he was at the entrance of the Crystal Palace, into which multitudes were thronging, it being one of the shilling days.

He entered too — carried on with the stream. He passed through nave, through

transept, and the various compartments, where the world's wonders were crowded together; but he looked at nothing—saw nothing.

At length he stopped near a fountain, arrested by the sight of an old man, who sat upon a bench, leaning upon his staff. There was something wild and picturesque in his garb and countenance. With his unshorn beard and streaming hair, he would have formed a good study for a painter; but it was the misery expressed in his face, which fixed that attention which neither statuary or paintings, gems or gold, could attract, and caused Mr. Morley to stop and gaze on him with earnestness, and listen to what he said, for the old man was speaking.

“Vanity! vanity!” muttered the old man, “it is all vanity. Thither the ships of Tarshish and the merchants of Zidon come; and the ships of Ophir bring their

gold, and the Queen of Sheba her spices and precious stones. Vanity! vanity! it is all vanity!”

“What brings you here then, my good old man,” said Mr. Morley, compassionately, “if such is the view you take of the objects around you?”

The old man raised his eyes, and looked wistfully at the stranger, then he replied slowly—

“I seek my daughter.”

“Surely you do not come to seek your daughter among the multitude of persons who are now passing through the Crystal Palace,” said Mr. Morley, with some surprise. “If you do, I fear it will be a vain search.—When did you lose her?”

“It was ten years last November,” replied the old man, reckoning on his fingers, “since she left me. Her poor mother soon died of a broken heart, and I have sought her with weary steps ever since. Sometimes

I travel here, sometimes there, but I cannot find her, and now I am come to London—this great Babylon, whither all the kings of the earth are sending their treasures, and where all the world is crowding to search for her. If she is in the land of the living, thither will she come too, for she was ever fond of gauds and toys. This is the place for women,” continued he, with much excitement; “here they have their tinkling ornaments, their chains and bracelets, and mufflers, the bonnets and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings. The rings and the nose jewels — the changeable suits of apparel and the mantles, and the wimples and the crisping pins — the glasses and the fine linen, and the hoods and the veils. It was the love of amusement and finery that lost me my child. She cared not for kirk-going, quiet folk.”

Mr. Morley was touched with the old man's grief. There was a wildness in his manner that made him doubt his perfect sanity, yet there was nothing in what he said which betokened madness.

The emaciation of his appearance, and his disordered garb, made him suspect that he was very poor, and he drew his purse from his pocket, thinking if he might venture to offer to assist him.

"I would advise you to leave this bewildering place, my good friend, and seek a comfortable lodging; and if you have not funds sufficient to meet your expenses," continued Mr. Morley, hesitatingly—for though the old man's dress was poverty-stricken, yet there was a look in the eye with which he glanced at the purse, which contradicted the belief—"I will assist you."

"Thank you for the kind offer," said the old man with a deep sigh, and gently putting

aside the purse ; “ but it is not poverty which oppresses me—I am not rich, but I have wherewithal to live upon, and enough for my Effie too, if I could find her ; but there is no trace of her—none to be found ! If I had my Effie again—my simple, innocent Effie—innocent as when I saw her last—I would buy the old farm back again, and take her thither—I was too hard with the child—poor thing ! I should have thought they might fancy each other before I invited my good-for-nothing nephew to come and see me. I cannot but think she is married to him—she would not else have left us thus. Sometimes my head is not quite right,” continued the old man, putting his hand to his head, “ but if I could find my child, all would be well. I am not so bewildered neither, for I know this is the great Babylon, that the prophet talked of. Give me back my Effie,” he continued with excitement, “ and I will take her

from this great Babylon back to the old farm—I will hide her among our hills, and set her to knit and spin. Silly child ! how could she leave her poor old father !”

Morley was struck with pity for the old man, and taking him kindly by the hand, proposed that they should seek his home. The old man silently accompanied him through the long avenues of the building, turning an anxious look upon every female form that passed him by. Although bent and decrepid, when they got into the open air, he walked so fast that Mr. Morley could hardly keep up with him, and he stopped not until he arrived at the house of a market gardener, at a distance of about a mile from the park.

Here he lodged with a decent Scotch family, in a cottage situated in the midst of a large vegetable garden.

An elderly woman came out to meet them.

She curtseyed to Mr. Morley, and looking compassionately at the old man, said—

“Good Mr. Elliott, dinner hour is past, but I have put yours aside for you. You must be weary and hungry, come in and sit down. Please you, sir,” continued she, addressing Mr. Morley, “will you come in and rest yourself likewise?”

“Thank you,” replied Mr. Morley, pausing at the cottage door, while the old man entered the house, “I am not tired, only a little out of breath from walking so fast. I wished to see the old man safely housed, lest he might come to some harm—he talks rather wildly. He is your father, I suppose?”

“No, sir,” said the woman, “no relative at all, poor man! but he is of our clan, and we knew him once, when he was well to do, in Scotland. Although not so well off as he was then, he has gear enough left to pay for himself—he lodges with us, and we see

that he is well cared for. He never raised up his head, poor man ! since his good-for-naught daughter ran away with her cousin—first the poor mother died, and then the father went half distraught. To be sure, it's my firm belief that Effie was married, and, indeed, there are some who say it could be proved ; but be that as it may, there is no certainty, those who could do so being out of the way."

"Effie !" said Mr. Morley, whom the name had not struck before. "Can that be the young person I met on board the steam-vessel, coming up from Plymouth ? If so, she is in London—but how to find her out ? Yes, she must be this old man's daughter, for her story exactly tallies with your account."

"That's impossible," returned the woman, "for Effie and her cousin were both drowned at sea. I have heard the name of the vessel

he was in, although I cannot recollect it just now. I do not expect that old Elliott will ever see his daughter alive again, though he talks of her as if she was living; but if it could be certified to him, that she was really married, it might help to settle his poor head."

"But this young woman spoke of an escape from shipwreck," returned Mr. Morley, "and her name is Effie."

"It may be so," replied the woman; but she shook her head doubtingly.

"Effie is a very common name in Scotland — she may be Effie, but she's not Effie Elliott. I wish it could be so, but it cannot be. Every day since the Crystal Palace was opened, poor old Elliott takes his seat, sometimes within, sometimes without the building, and watches the face of every female who passes him by. It keeps him in a constant state of excitement, and his

head is all the worse for it. ‘Every one goes thither,’ he says, ‘and she will be there too ;’ but he will never see his daughter again—Effie must be dead.”

Mr. Morley returned on his footsteps.

“To-morrow—no, not to-morrow,” and he sighed heavily as the thought crossed his mind, “but the day following, I will exert myself to the utmost to find this old man’s daughter—for his daughter I am sure she is, and she spoke of being married.”

And now, immersed in painful reflections which the idea of to-morrow—that day of bitter separation—had conjured up, Mr. Morley passed through street after street, without considering whither he was going. At last he was roused by the exclamation of an old woman, who was wheeling a barrow of oranges.

“It’s I am glad to see your honour again,” said she, stopping her wheelbarrow, and addressing him.

He started from his reverie, and looked at her.

“Please your honour,” continued she, “I’m afeard you think I’m very ungrateful—I would have called to let you know all about the young woman you so kindly interested yourself for, but I had the misfortune to lose your address—I put it safe into my pocket, but Nancy’s children came rummaging the pocket, poor little things! glad to see grandmother; and so with one little hand taking out this, and another that, and trying on the thimble, and wanting the scissors to cut with, the direction was lost.”

“Oh! it is you, my good woman, is it?” said Mr. Morley, recognizing her as well by the accent as by what she said. “I have been meditating a search after you, as I wanted to ask you some questions respecting the young person you so benevolently took with you to your daughter’s house.”

“It’s the young Mrs. M’Donnell you mean to ask after,” replied the old woman; “but she’s not with Nancy now—she has happily found out some friends of her own.”

“M’Donnell! that is not her name—is it?” said Mr. Morley, with some disappointment. “I had hoped her name would prove to be Elliott—Effie Elliott.”

“Well, Elliott or M’Donnell, it does not signify, please your honour,” replied the old woman, “it’s all one—it’s the same person. Her own name was Elliott, and the poor thing ran away with her cousin Gilbert M’Donnell, who deserted her in America—more’s the shame!—and left her to struggle on with a sick child.”

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Mr. Morley; “you do not mean to tell me that her husband’s name was Gilbert M’Donnell?”

“Yes, yes, Gilbert M’Donnell,” returned the old woman. “I wish he was not a

countryman of mine—however, he was more than half Scotch. Not that I mean to disparage the Scotch, your honour, only I'm glad he's not Irish intirely."

A ray of light seemed to penetrate through the deep gloom that surrounded Morley's heart while the old woman was speaking. Could it be possible? — was there the slightest chance of it? Yet it was the same name—Gilbert M'Donnell—the name of the man his Julia was wedded to. A marriage with his cousin! Could this be authenticated, Julia was free; for if such marriage did take place, it must have been previous to the ceremony performed by Mr. M'Intyre—it could not have occurred afterwards, as on that very day M'Donnell joined the vessel which was lost at sea.

Quick as lightning those thoughts flashed through Mr. Morley's mind.

“And where is Mrs. M'Donnell now? With what friends is she?” exclaimed he, trembling lest he might lose the chance of elucidating this mystery.

“I'll tell you how it came about, sir,” replied the good woman. “Nancy looked and inquired every where for a situation for the poor thing, but nothing offered—nobody likes taking a stranger, so then we thought as how she might learn to do the ironing, and she was handy enough at it, and then—”

“But at present—where is she at present? What is become of her?” interrupted Mr. Morley, burning with impatience.

The old woman was evidently surprised at his energetic manner, then she continued—

“Your honour is so kind-hearted, you will be glad to hear. It's only three days ago a Scotch farmer from the Highlands, who came all the way to see the grand show, called in at Nancy's with his mother, a de-

cent old body, to inquire for a laundress. Mrs. M'Donnell was ironing at the table, and the mother had no sooner thrown her eyes upon her, than she fell to embracing her. The poor young woman fainted away with joy. It was her own nurse and her foster-brother, who had both been present at her marriage—that is, at the binding contract, which is a marriage after the Scotch fashion, though, for my part, I can never think it as good as one by the priest. However, they say it's one in law. Well, there was great rejoicing, but they could give Effie no account of her father, or whether he was dead or alive, as they had gone away from the neighbourhood the very day after she left her father's house, being summoned on a long journey to the death-bed of a relative who left them a farm ; and as Effie Elliott and Gilbert M'Donnell were cousins, they thought it would all come to rights directly, and no harm done."

Mr. Morley listened in an unspeakable transport of joy. The narration, the names, the incidents, all being so well linked together, as to give him a hope that the idea, which made his heart throb with an emotion which his powerful frame could hardly endure, might yet be realized — that of Julia being entirely his own.

He could hardly command himself sufficiently to inquire with any collectedness again, where the Scotch farmer and his mother, with whom Effie and her child were now residing, had lodged themselves.

The old woman said she was on her way thither — it was in her route home — not a great distance from Nancy's house.

Mr. Morley accompanied her as she wheeled her barrow on. Nancy had bought the oranges out of a ship from "Portingall" for her, she said, and her sale had been successful amongst the children, particularly the

school-boys—she must try and do something to earn her bread, for Nancy had to work hard, and there were many little mouths to feed.

Thus did the good woman continue to talk, but Mr. Morley did not hear a word of what she said.

They soon arrived at the humble lodging where the Highland farmer and his mother were located. They found them seated over their tea, mother and son endeavouring to entertain Effie with an account of the wonders they had that day seen, and promising her and Lilly a treat on the next day, should she be more disposed to go thither than she was that morning.

Could Mr. Morley have given a thought to the subject, he would have seen, that the old man was right in saying, “that all the world were seeking the Crystal Palace;” but he was incapable of thinking.

Effie M'Donnell was rejoiced to see her

benefactor, though much surprised at his appearance, and naming him to her nurse and foster-brother, they both, in their Scotch phraseology, thanked him over and over again, for his kindness to the “*puir bairn*.”

A few words explained to the good people the purport of his visit, and it was not long before he elicited from them particulars sufficient to prove that the Gilbert M'Donnell wedded to Effie Elliott — having exchanged plight and troth with her, before credible witnesses—was none other than the man who, in a week or two afterwards, afraid, most probably, to exasperate his father by acknowledging his prior espousals, and bringing forward his wife, then waiting for him in a little lonely way-side inn, received from the reluctant Mr. Grahame the hand of his almost infant daughter, Julia, in marriage.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ There various news I heard of love and strife,
Of peace and war, health, sickness, death and life.”

POPE.

LOUD were the animadversions of the good folk upon the conduct of Gilbert M'Donnell — many the tears that Effie shed upon hearing of the subsequent ceremony he had gone through, while she was anxiously waiting for him in the way-side inn.

Yet while she wept anew over his desertion of herself and Lilly, she recurred to those days in Scotland when he had lavished on her that love which had won her young heart ; and perhaps, amidst all her apparent

grief a sentiment of joy that he was still alive, notwithstanding the wrongs he had heaped upon her, was predominant.

The news, however, that her dear old father was living, and in her vicinity, filled her with rapture, and she would have flown to throw herself into his arms on the instant, had not Mr. Morley suggested the prudence of not overwhelming him with a sudden surprise, and advised that her nurse and foster-brother should prepare him for the interview—gently hinting to them at the same time how unsettled was the state of his mind.

On the morrow they sought the old man, according to Mr. Morley's advice.

He heard them with calmness. There was nothing but what he had anticipated—all the world had come, and his Effie amongst them, to see the Crystal Palace; but when they spoke of her being the wife of M'Donnell, and of their having been the witnesses

to the ceremony that made her so, the old man's calmness was gone, and his joy knew no bounds.

Yes, he would buy again the old farm, and take thither his innocent, forsaken Effie and her child — the punishment of her disobedience was past, and she would now be happy with her old father, far away from the vanities of the world, and near the kirk to which her forefathers were used to go — happy among their quiet neighbours, and Lilly should be brought up in a humble, God-fearing manner — taught to dress in plain attire, to love going to the kirk, and to eschew wakes and fairs.

A letter from his London lawyer, soon put an end to M'Donnell's pursuit of Julia ; but whether any contrition for his abandonment of Effie and his child, united to the relenting of a tender heart ready to forgive, and to cheat herself into the same belief that Mariana held, when she says,

“ They say best men are moulded out of faults !
And for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad ; so may my husband,” —

might not have brought them again together some time or other, cannot now be proved, as a fall from his horse on the borders of Germany, whither he hastened on finding that his marriage with Effie Elliott was fully established, put a premature end to his career.

It may be as well to mention here, that in a few months afterwards, by the exertions of Mr. Morley, the tract of ground entitled “ Lauffenberg,” which M'Donnell had purchased in Germany, was sold to advantage, and the sum of money it realized enabled his widow to get back the farm in Scotland for her father, whose mind, always running upon a purchase which he had not funds sufficient to accomplish, would probably never have recovered itself entirely, had he

not at last been established in his old haunts.

If the night was dark, that so long hung over the fortunes of Morley and his beloved, bright was the awakening dawn which succeeded.

“To-day to the Crystal Palace, my Julia, and to-morrow into the country,” was Morley’s morning salutation, as he entered the room where Julia and her kind friends, the Caringtons, were seated at breakfast.

The day before had been given to making various business arrangements, and to visiting Effie and her father—this one was to be given to pleasure, and they all agreed it should be for the Crystal Palace.

Fêtes and tournaments of the olden time—Field of the Cloth of Gold—days when Versailles was in her glory—Arabian story and fairy tale—visions of enchanted palace and gorgeous structure raised by the magi-

cian's wand—every thing beautiful, in short, read of, dreamed of, and fancied, faded into nothingness before the reality presented to Julia's eye ; while Morley himself, who had passed through the fairy building two days before, without scarcely giving it a thought, felt how beautiful, how varied was the sight, addressing itself as it did to every intellectual faculty, as well as to every outward sense of man.

“Ages to come, it will hang about the memory of posterity, while posterity exists, as a bright point to which everything rare and wonderful in the world was attracted—a loadstone that drew within its influence all that nature has formed in her various freaks, or that the skill and ingenuity of man can devise. A point in the world's history—an era, the splendour of which can never be veiled by devouring Time, with any but a light and silvery cloud.”

Thus meditated Mr. Morley, as he trod the galleries with Julia.

* * * *

Some weeks later, in the same edifice, standing before the exquisite Gobelin tapestry, might be seen a group of ladies, arrived a few days before from the west of England.

“My dear Kitty,” said Miss Ellersley, “who do you think I heard, from Mrs. A—, to whom I have been just speaking, was here in London at the Exhibition, a short time since?”

“Really I cannot tell,” replied Miss Kitty Chatterton, laughing. “Some of our acquaintances I suppose, for every one comes here. Perhaps the fat butcher and his wife, from Seapoint, or our draper, Mr. Calico.”

“No—you are quite in the wrong, my dear,” returned Miss Ellersley. “It is not

any of those, though I dare say, they have been all here. It was Mr. and Mrs. Morley."

"Impossible!" said Miss Kitty. "Don't you remember how Mrs. Morley eloped in France with some German baron, and how we heard Mr. Morley was suing for a divorce; that was the story, was it not, or something very like it? I had it all from the best authority. I cannot imagine how they managed to keep it out of the public papers, but there is not a doubt of the elopement. Your friend must have taken some other people for them."

"Oh! I am sure she did not make any mistake," replied Miss Ellersley; "I am quite satisfied she was right, for she said they were with the Carringtons. Grace Neville, you know, who jilted the old General to whom she was engaged, and married Frederick Carrington—there will be a breach of promise suit soon, you may be certain."

“ I have no doubt of it,” returned Miss Kitty ; “ I heard they were in London, but still I think it impossible that the Morleys——”

“ My dear Miss Ellersley, how can you and Kitty make such preposterous mistakes !— Your information is very imperfect indeed !” interrupted indignantly the kind-hearted Miss Davis, who had been examining the magnificent tapestry, with the admiring eye of a connoisseur in needle-work. “ General Craddock arrived yesterday at the Carringtons with Emmy, Lucy, Harry, and the clergyman, good Mr. Griffith, having franked them all up, and insisted upon the latter, in whose charge the young people were left, being included in the party. I saw them this morning, and they are, no doubt, at this moment enjoying themselves among the wonders around us. This you must allow does not look like the preliminary to a suit

for breach of promise. There certainly has been a cloud hanging over the beautiful Mrs. Morley, but it was entirely in consequence of some engagement her father made her enter into when she was quite a child. However, this has been all cleared up—the engagement proved to be no engagement at all ; and I am happy to be able to tell you that she and her husband are at this present time travelling in Switzerland, and I understand mean to winter in Italy. I had it from dear Mrs. Carrington, who received a letter from them very lately. I should speak of them, however, as Sir Everard and Lady Morley, for I see by this day's paper that the old baronet is dead, and that Mr. Morley is the next heir, and comes in for the title and estates ; this will probably bring them home from the Continent sooner than they intended."

CONCLUSION.

MISS DAVIS was quite right in her conjecture.

The death of his relative brought Mr. Morley—now Sir Everard Morley—home from the Continent much sooner than he had anticipated; and as the deceased baronet had always resided in or near London, suffering his mansion-house in the county of —— to fall completely into decay, he determined to fix himself at once in his own paternal residence in Wales.

It had been partly re-built and much improved immediately after his marriage; but Julia's subsequent ill health, and the events which followed, had prevented their ever inhabiting it together.

Thither he now repaired, with his beautiful wife and blooming boy. The health of the former had been much re-established, by the short excursion they had made together abroad — although, perhaps, more so by the delightful calm and contentedness of mind which she now enjoyed ; while the latter, revelling in health and joyousness, gave promise of intellect, and quickness of comprehension, that rejoiced the heart of the fond and proud father.

Julia saw nothing but beauties in the old-fashioned house to which Sir Everard brought her.

It was his house—the house he had inhabited before he was married—the house whose walls were the confidants of the bitter regrets he had felt when torn from her, as he thought, for ever—there had his prayers and petitions ascended for her to the throne of grace—from thence had he written to her

those letters which had helped to elevate her thoughts to heaven, and taught her to fix her hopes on a happy meeting with him beyond the grave.

It was a rambling sort of building, such as our ancestors were fond of erecting, with long passages, broad staircases, and airy rooms, sufficient to accommodate a large family, but planned without any attention to architectural beauty, each succeeding generation making an addition to the edifice as they wanted it.

The improvements made in the wing which was re-built had, however, rendered that end of the house very commodious ; and altogether, it assorted better, perhaps, with the picturesque irregularity, and the abrupt acclivities of the romantic and secluded spot in which it was placed, than a more modern and symmetrical building would have done.

In this retirement do they reside at the

present time—the Carringtons, with the young Nevilles, and General Craddock, being on a visit with them.

Julia regulates her household admirably; and family prayer opens and closes every day, as it glides calmly by.

Neither Sir Everard or Julia have any taste for the pleasures of the world, and they have traced out for themselves a life of usefulness,—and of happiness too, we may say,—as far as happiness can be expected, where all is transitory and uncertain. And if their trials in this life be not yet passed,—as who can say what the morrow will bring forth?—they are firm in the faith that the Rock on which they have founded their sure hope cannot be moved, and that they are travelling fast to their land of promise.

With hearts chastened, humbled, and corrected, they enjoy in thankfulness the blessings which Providence has bestowed

upon them, keeping ever in view the injunctions,—“to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God,”—“to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world.”

And thus we leave them.

Grace, the happy wife of one earnest in his wishes to promote the true faith in a foreign land, looks to assisting her husband in the ministry, on his return to India, by attending to the schools he has established, and administering to the wants, as much as lies in her power, of the scattered flock committed to his care.

Whether both her sisters are to accompany her thither, is not yet quite ascertained; but it is suspected that Emmy has already made up her mind to remain in England.

Miss Davis pursues the path in life allotted to her, with diligent earnestness and

uncompromising sincerity. No change has as yet taken place in Miss Kitty Chatterton or Miss Ellersley—tiresome to themselves, and mischievous to others, they continue to run the same unceasing round of gossip. What improvement years or misfortune may make in them, it is impossible to say.

Aunt Milly has joined her relatives settled in Australia ; and contributes, by her plain good sense and kindness of heart, to smooth the difficulties that sometimes embarrass her less experienced nieces : but altogether, the colonists are prospering, and Julia has had very pleasing letters from them lately.

THE END



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